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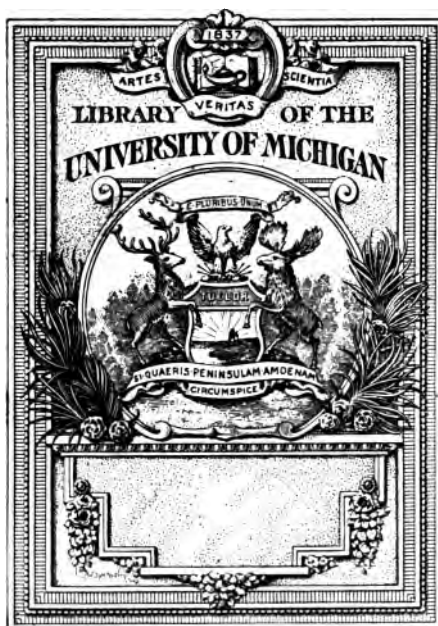
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SIENA
AND HER
ARTISTS

FREDERICK
H. H. SEYMOUR







Photo]

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD.
By Neroccio di Landi.
(No. 282 in the "Belle Arti"). See p. 174.

[Lombardi

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SIENA AND HER ARTISTS

By
FREDERICK SEYMOUR

AUTHOR OF "SAUNTERINGS IN SPAIN"

WITH A MAP AND SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

"Siena rimane nella mente come un sogno, e non si dimentica, si vede sempre."

—MARGHERITA DI SAVOIA.

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PREFACE

DURING several visits to Siena, and more particularly during a stay there in the memorable year of the Exposition of Sienese Art, 1904, the Author of this volume found himself under the spell of a School of Art wholly novel to him. The notes, references, and observations then made for his personal guidance, he now ventures to publish, in the hope that they may prove of service to such visitors to Siena as may not have opportunity or leisure to consult more voluminous and capable authorities upon the subject.

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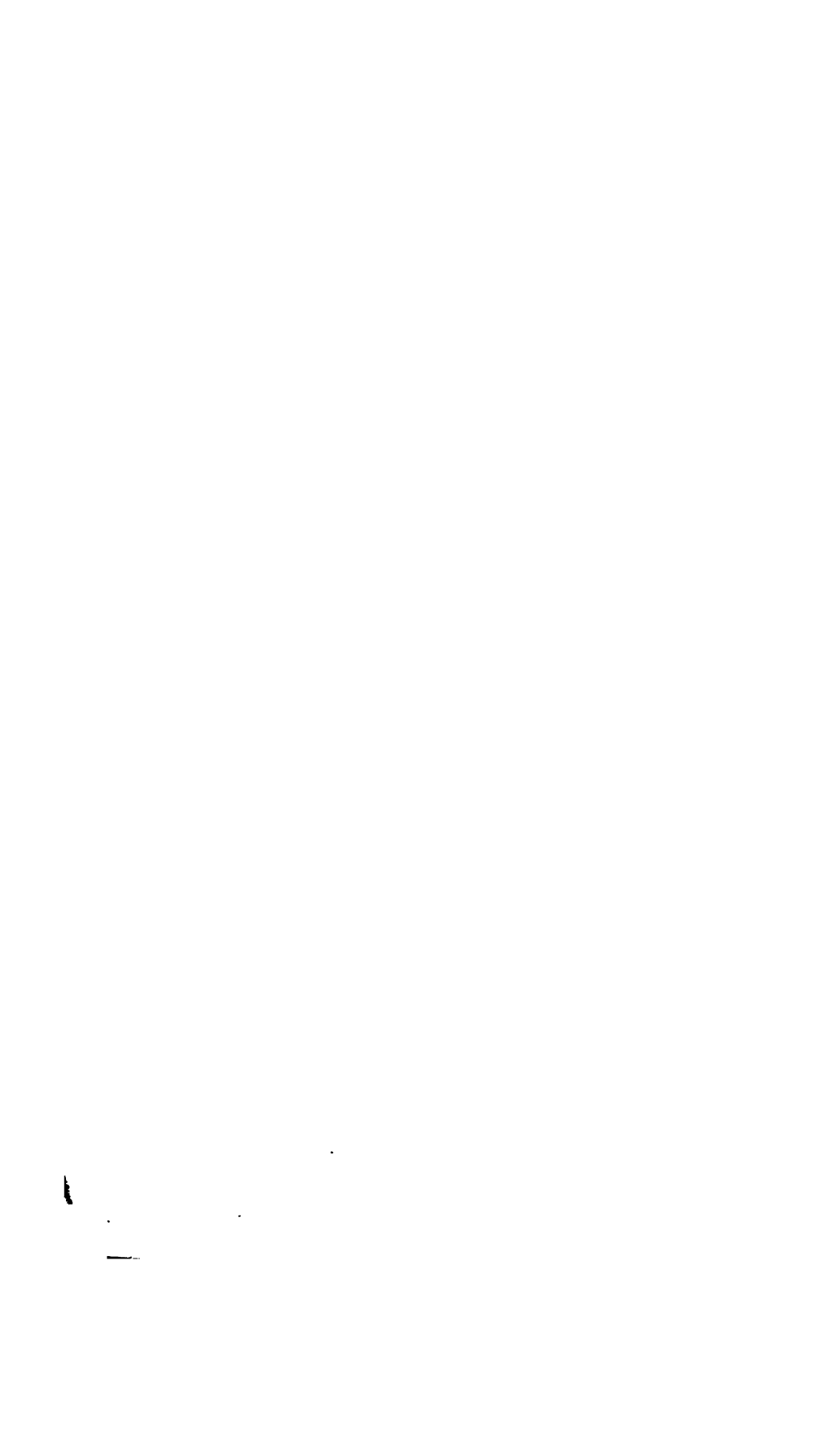
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PART I

THE CITY OF SIENA



CHAPTER I

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY. TORRE DEL MANGIA, AND PIAZZA DEL CAMPO

You experience but one brief moment of disappointment in your first visit to the beautiful and perfectly unique city of Siena. It is, when you first enter it from the Railway Station. For some reason only known to themselves, the city authorities, instead of allowing you to drive through the fine Porta Camollia (but a few hundred yards distant), decreed the demolition of a portion of the grand wall, and formed a frightful modern entrance, consisting of an iron gate, which they christened the "Barriera"; and, to give it what they considered a mediæval flavour, placed upon the gate the proud Siennese badge, two modern wolves—and bad they

are! However, it is but a momentary shock, for having cleared the "barrier" you instantly find yourself in a sixteenth-century city. Nothing thenceforth gives you a second doubt about that. Of course the *monumental* buildings are far more ancient (as they are in all the Italian capitals), but the beautiful streets — the fine street architecture — are consistently, throughout and everywhere, mediæval, as they are in no other city in Italy or elsewhere. You left the present behind you when you left the "Barriera," and you entered immediately into the past.

How the Sienese possessed themselves of the wolves is a thing lost in the obscurity of the ages. Either Rome gave them to Siena as a reward for her fidelity, or Siena took them because of her admiration for Rome and all things Roman.

No doubt Siena would have liked to have appropriated the seven hills, but Nature denied her more than the three which the topographers have assigned to her.

Siena, in proportion to her population, which is said not much to exceed 27,000,



GENERAL VIEW OF SIENA.

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GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 5

seems a very large city. And so she is, as regards the circuit of her fine walls, which are, however, except at certain points, far removed from her inhabited dwellings. Formerly the population must have been far larger than at present. Indeed we hear that the Great Pestilence of 1348 killed off the incredible number of 80,000. No after-immigration nor any other cause seems to have compensated Siena for her losses, or to have affected the certainly low average of the present day. The city is said to be built on three of the undulating low hills, which form a characteristic feature of this portion of Tuscany. The height generally is about 1300 feet above sea-level. The most elevated and probably the most ancient portion is Castelvechio, "Castellum Vetus," upon the south-west, which is some few feet higher. There are some grounds for believing that it was upon that height that the Romans had their "Place of Arms." The modern name gives some warrant for the supposition.

A succession of the main thoroughfares

(virtually forming one street) from the Porta Camollia, upon the extreme northern point, to the Porta Romana, or to the Porta Tufi, upon the south, may be regarded as fairly cutting the city in half. And from this generally central, and not very arbitrary division, sidé streets ramify in all directions, filling up the ravines, and spreading over the lower spurs down to the walls, or near them, and are sometimes seriously steep for a tired pedestrian who does not realise, until he has performed the obvious walk between the northern and southern gates, what an up-and-down city Siena is.

He then perceives that he has been ascending to the Piazza Salimbeni (the central portion of the city); that he then descends to the Costa di Barberi (just where the immense mass of the Palazzo Pubblico first shows itself), and that thence he continues another ascent until he arrives at the southern or south-western gates. It may be mentioned here, to summarise in brief the main features of the topography, that the main thoroughfare alluded to above is called the Via

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 7

Camollia, at the Porta Camollia; and then it becomes the Via Cavour. Somewhere about the point where this street touches the Piazza del Campo (or Municipio) three streets diverge, the Via di S. Martino, Via Ricasoli, and Via di Salicotti. All these in their turn debouch into the Via Romana, which terminates at the great gate of that name—the south-western entrance into the city.

One of the most individual attractions of Siena as a sight is, that it is all “sights.” Unless you are about to visit the “lions” of the city, you don’t go in search of anything. Every street is a sight; every palace is a monument of ancient days. Whichever way you wander you are confronted with palaces and beautiful mediæval buildings. They are all around you. And so lofty they all are, that you are almost always in their shadow—no slight attraction, if you find yourself in Siena in July, or later! The width of the city is greatest between Porta San Marco on the west, and the eastern gate—Pispini, or Porta San Viene, as it is also styled. The narrowest portion is that immediately within

the Porta Camollia. The southern portion of the city is generally that which lies furthest from the walls. A large tract on the eastern side also, *e.g.* that lying between the Oratorio di San Bernardino and the San Martino district, is far removed from the *enceinte*.

It is an endless diversion to the traveller to acquaint himself with the geography of the city, by rambling through the sloping streets which ramify from the more central thoroughfares. Nearly all are equally venerable, and there is not one but contains many beautiful architectural memorials of the past. Towers and turrets, palaces machicolated and crenelated, are all around you. Never were there so many palaces — you are curious to know where the dwellings of the lowly could have been. Many of these buildings still retain upon their walls and porches their old massive iron rings, their banner-holders, and their knockers — in many cases most artistic, and testifying to the traditional skill of the old iron-workers of Siena. Another enviable distinction of the city is the presence of so many inscriptions upon walls, and gates, and

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 9

towers, that you might compile a record of Siena from mural sayings and from armorial bearings alone. Some of these are even of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. San Bernardino's "I.H.S.," surrounded with rays, is profusely disseminated through the city. (It will be remembered that the device was San Bernardino's own, and one which he was in the habit of bearing about with him.) Papal escutcheons, too, on walls and towers are numberless. That is only to be expected in a city which has given no less than eight of her citizens to Rome, as wearers of the Papal tiara. Naturally, the shields of the Piccolomini recur with frequency, both Popes Pius II. and III. having belonged to that great House. In variety of Papal coats-of-arms, Viterbo alone surpasses Siena, for Viterbo was often the refuge of persecuted Popes, which Siena was not.

Another characteristic of Siena, and one adding to its many attractions as a mediæval city, is the absence of "side-walks." Siena is far from being a bustling, commercial town, so that there is ample space in the

road for wheeled traffic and pedestrians, without danger to life or limb for the latter. Even a casual visitor to Siena will not fail to remark the many finely situated prominent points, "coigns of vantage," which have been taken possession of by some of the larger and more famous churches. They present themselves as natural bastions, and might have been thus occupied had it been necessary to have a second line of defensive works within the perimeter of the walls. Generally these are spurs or eminences in advance of, and shooting forth from, the central mass occupied by the city. The churches of Sant' Agostino and Santo Spirito occupy two such promontories upon the south; and San Francesco and Santa Chiara (the latter dis-established conventual buildings), upon the east. This chain of natural forts would be completed by Santa Marta and San Domenico upon the west, whilst *the* Fortezza, the only real fortress (dating from the days of Charles V.), guards the north - westerly curtain of the walls. All these points command superb views, the churches of

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 11

Sant' Agostino and Santo Spirito being pre-eminent in that respect.

It seems not certain when the splendid and massive walls of the city were built. We hear of the Porta Pispini (that upon the eastern side of the city) in the year 1107, when the remains of Ansano, the first Christian martyr in these parts, and still the most revered Sienese saint, passed through this gate. "*Il Santo viene! — viene!*" was the cry, and hence this gate was rechristened "Porta San Viene." But with the exception of occasional references to the gates, we have no guide to the antiquity of the walls. There are no walls so lofty and so fine in colour (of the pinkish Siena stone) in Italy, and so far as ancient appearance goes they *might* rival Rome in antiquity. It is said that once upon a time there were thirty-six gates. Now there are only eight. Some of them are very fine in architecture, and amazingly strong the Porta Romana and Porta Pispini must have been in old days. It seems that the Porta Romana was once called "Porta San Martino," and also "Porta

Nuova." Over the Porta Romana there is a dissolving (almost dissolved) fresco, upon which were lavished the labours of three great artists, Taddeo di Bartolo, Sano, and Sassetta. Above Porta Pispini is a rotting work of Sodoma. Just without this gate is a very picturesque outwork: a bastion designed by Baldassarre Peruzzi, mentioned below as an artist of some skill as a painter, but more valued as an architect. The next gate to Porta Pispini, upon the eastern side, is Porta Ovile. (The walk between the two gates is entrancing for the beauty of the view.) The Porta Ovile has a very pronounced antique air, and is the most picturesque of all the gates. A crucifix, too, of any age, hangs over it. Close without this gate is a most graceful Gothic resort for washerwomen; the "Fonte Nuova," as it is called. It is of most impressive antiquity. Camaino di Crescentino built it 1298 A.D. You will have to pass this gate upon your way to the Church of the Osservanza (often referred to in this volume). Round about the Porta Ovile many of the poorer classes live; the

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streets are narrow, and there is a less well-to-do look about this neighbourhood than about other parts of the city. But you get accustomed to that, for it is near San Francesco, where you will often find yourself. In the old time, the large and influential, but not very wealthy class of "wool-carders," had their dwellings in these parts.

It is but a short way from here that, by a slight ascent, you reach the great Northern Gate, the historical Porta Camollia. ("Camollia" is pronounced by the people, in "modo Tusculano," "Hamollia," for in Siena, as in Florence, the "Cs" are all aspirated. You will probably dislike the custom at first, and get to like it later, when habit has made it familiar.) Porta Camollia being the weakest point in her defences, it has been here, in the chequered history of Siena, that battles have been most frequent. As far ago as 1230, the Florentines and the Orvietans combined "rushed" the gate. Here Cosmo di Medici entered the city in 1554. But the present gate is a work of the seventeenth century. It is now but a monument of

Siena's bondage. A flattering inscription over the gate records her final subjugation by the upstart House of Medici. Thus it runs: "*Cor magis tibi Siena pandit!*" After centuries of conflict with the invader from without, and with traitors within, Siena welcomed any strong hand, and even learned to hug her chains.

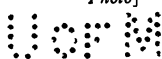
The walk or drive beyond here, without the walls, to the next gate upon the west—the Porta Fonte Branda—is again most charming. Another pretty Gothic fountain, Fonte Pescaia, lies below you on the west of the Porta Camollia. Further on, you come across the Fortezza, already alluded to. This fortress is now partly a barrack, but is more remarkable for being the highest and shadiest portion of the public garden, known as the "Lizza." It was originally built by Don Diego, the Emissary of Charles V., to terrorize the people of Siena. It was pulled down by the enraged people, and re-erected by the Medici, and it now forms but a picturesque feature in the landscape. The city walls hence up to the Porta Fonte Branda were

17. 1



Photo]

[Alinari



ST. CATHERINE.
By Neroccio di Landi.
In the Oratorio della Contrada dell' Oca.

To face p. 15.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 15

demolished by the Spaniards of Charles V. to form the fortress. Through the small gate of Fonte Branda you pass into a delicious country. The gate is but little used for traffic. It is chiefly interesting as being close to what may be called the *terra santa* of Saint Catherine, the Via Benincasa, in the district of Fonte Branda, which is still occupied by tanners and dyers as in her time. (Her father was a dyer, it will be recollected.) Another Gothic fountain stands near this gate, again the resort of washerwomen. The pure springs here deserve a better fate, considering the dearth of them in Siena, than to be made the receptacle of old bottles, tin-pots, old newspapers, and other *olla-podrida* of rubbish. Not creditable to the Municipio is this neglect of an historic site!

Hence, to the Porta Romana (already noticed) there are three gates—the Porte Laterina, San Marco, and Tufi; the last about the southernmost point of the city.

No city has maintained its nomenclature and its political and social divisions like Siena. It still has its “Terzi,” dating from

the earliest times — the Terzo di Città, Terzo di Camollia, and Terzo di San Martino ; and these Terzi are divided into seventeen “Contrade,” each with a distinctive badge of its own, a banner, and a chapel. Of these mediæval features the people are very proud ; and their pride is very marked during the great annual semi-religious pageant known as the “Palio.”

Each Contrada worships in its own chapel, where so many works of art are preserved, which are regarded as the private possessions of the particular Contrada.

The Piazza del Campo, or Municipio, forms the chief point of attraction to the visitor, not only as having been for so many hundred years the centre of the political, religious, and social life of the inhabitants, but as being the site of the famous Palazzo Pubblico, with its magnificent Torre del Mangia. It forms a splendid amphitheatre, and here, if Siena ever were a Roman city, would have been the arena which the Romans would have dedicated to the celebration of their indispensable games. It is most probable that



Photo]

PALAZZO PUBBLICO, SIENA.

[Brogi

To face p. 16.




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the vast palace was finished in the early fourteenth century at the latest, for we find Simone Martini and Lorenzetti decorating the walls early in that era. There are probably several palaces in Siena anterior to the Palazzo Pubblico; for the oldest are of travertine, and this which is being treated of, is of travertine below, and of brick above. I do not think that the name of the architect is known. Lorenzo Maitani and Camaino di Crescentino were two of the Sienese artists who were working towards the end of the thirteenth century, but it is not known that the building was theirs. The great Torre del Mangia (the Campanile of the Palace) is a later work. It is said to have been commenced in 1338. Three names are assigned as those of the architects: Minuccio and Francesco di Rinaldo of Perugia, and Agostino di Giovanni; but none of them appears to have furnished the design. The plan of the summit has been attributed to Lippo Memmi. The name of "Mangia" suggests the word "*mangiare*" (to eat). Upon first hearing the name I supposed that the idea had been that of

“swallowing”—that this immense tower had “swallowed up” all other towers—even as Aaron’s serpent-rod had devoured up the minor specimens produced by the Egyptian necromancers. The name is said, however, to have been derived from the chief of the original bellringers.

For height, massiveness, and beauty combined, no tower in Europe has surpassed it, although for symmetry and grace I think it must yield to Arnolfo di Cambio’s splendid lily-like tower at Florence. The great tocsin-bell here is rung upon the rarest occasions now, but *is* sounded upon the occasion of the Palio, which is of national importance, and of most stirring significance to the citizens still. Formerly, it warned and alarmed Siena whenever the republic was in danger, which happened very often.

The Torre del Mangia and the Campanile of the Duomo are competitors as regards height. Perhaps the Duomo Campanile seems the highest, for it stands upon much higher ground. As nobody appears to have decided the question, they must continue to be rivals,



GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 19

and be content with the fact that they both dominate the city. A pretty little chapel, Cappella della Piazza, stands at the base of the Mangia Tower. It was erected to commemorate the disappearance of the terrible plague of 1348, and was completed in 1376. In the subsequent century, Federighi, the great sculptor and architect, raising the roof, affixed thereto his classical frieze of griffins. It is on too large a scale for this chapel. Federighi has repeated the same design upon the little chapel near the so-called Torre del Diavolo. He was indebted, I think, to the temple of Antoninus and Faustina at Rome for the frieze. The six statues in the niches are not remarkable as works of art.

The visitor will remark that there is a considerable descent from the main street to the slope on which the Palazzo Pubblico is built. Supposing that the authorities had any preference, it seems curious to have selected a site upon a hill-side. You are led to imagine that the greater part of the circle had already been occupied. Certainly, some of the palaces round the Campo seem to be

not inferior in antiquity to the official one. To the later builder of palaces here, a peremptory order was given to adhere to the style adopted in the Palazzo Pubblico. Siena was once the City of Towers. There are several in this quarter still, which enhance the markedly antique appearance of this portion of the city. The Piazza has always been, and still is, the favourite centre for public ceremonies, celebrations, and rejoicings, sacred or profane. The passionate declamations of demagogues have here aroused public fury, which the discourses of saintly men like San Bernardino have endeavoured to appease or to assuage. The large, open spaces of this Campo suggested themselves only too well as an arena for battle and bloodshed. In our calmer days it is now chiefly devoted to the Races of the Palio.

Many old pictures and engravings are extant, representing the scenes of pageantry, games, and spectacles, which have taken place in later mediæval times. You will see in such representations that all these festivities took place in the centre of the

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CITY 21

Piazza, whilst the spectators occupied the periphery. Now, upon the occasion of the Palio, these positions are reversed. The people (and a vast assemblage it always is) are gathered together in the centre, whilst the circuit around them forms the racecourse. It will not be necessary now to enlarge upon the beauty of the interior of the Palazzo Pubblico, and of its numberless rooms. The subjects of the frescoes, and of the chief works of art there, are fully noticed in Part II. Yet the frescoes of Spinello Aretino and his son, though not Sienese, must be touched upon, as they must often have been admired by Sienese artists, and very probably may have influenced some of them. These frescoes painted on the walls of the Sala di Balìa (*circa* 1407) in honour of a Sienese Pope, Alexander III. (Bandinelli), illustrate the war between Venice and Frederick Barbarossa. Generally they are effective and highly decorative, still fine in colour, and full of movement. Upon two of the vaults the Pope Alexander III. is seen "baptizing King Canute and also Thomas à Becket."

Although we may not understand why these two personages should be coupled together, nor why St. Thomas à Becket should have stood in need of baptism, these frescoes will be of special interest to English and Danish spectators.

Martino di Bartolommeo, a Sienese and a pupil of Taddeo di Bartolo, assisted Spinello in painting some of the vaults.

Otherwise Martino di Bartolommeo has but two small works in Siena to represent him. They are in the "Belle Arti." In one of them appears St. Dorothea (Ambrogio's favourite saint), whom Martino has boldly carried off to adorn his own work—bouquet and all!¹

¹ *Vide* Part II.

CHAPTER II

THE CATHEDRAL, PIAZZA DEL DUOMO, AND SAN GIOVANNI

THE Duomo lies conveniently near to the Piazza del Campo, so that every one will take the opportunity of passing thence to the Via di Città, which leads direct to the Cathedral.

In approaching the southern side of this street you find yourself confronted by a building, lofty and imposing, though ruinous and abandoned. At first sight, you seem to have got to some other point in the city which you had not been intending to visit. But, in reality, this is the skeleton-façade of the nave of the immense new Cathedral, which had been planned by the Sienese, and which they had intended should outshine every cathedral in Italy. The present Duomo,

as it stands, was to have served as transept in the projected colossal undertaking.

A distinguished architect, Lando di Pietro, furnished the plan of the new work, which was commenced in 1339. A sea of political troubles, the Great Plague of 1348, and, as we should say, a "press of business," prevented the Sienese from following up a work which they had much at heart. They had therefore to content themselves with developing and beautifying that which they already possessed. The portion of the abandoned building, which you pass beneath, incomplete as it is, is as imposing as some Roman ruin. Another portion of this unfinished Cathedral has been utilised for the "Opera del Duomo," which contains Duccio's "Majestas," and many other works of art. Whether the zebra-like effects of cathedrals with black and white stripes will impress altogether favourably at first sight, will probably be decided in the negative, especially by those who have not seen the style at Lucca, and Orvieto, and elsewhere. But it cannot be denied that, in a scheme which combines this style with the assistance

of all the arts in decoration and ornamentation, the *coup d'œil* becomes very rich and effective, upon the whole. The style of this gorgeous temple must be called, I suppose, Italian Gothic. That means, as elsewhere, a great deal of Italian and very little Gothic. Except at Milan and Florence,¹ the Italians never took very kindly to Gothic. Their classical traditions were too strong. They never sincerely got away from the horizontal to the true vertical, which is the soul of Gothic. In all their façades, there are always classical pediments and tympanums squeezed into what they supposed to be Gothic gables, and clapped on to a still loftier pediment.

They never could abandon their cupolas even, and very poor these often are, and quite opposed to Gothic sentiment. And, further, in this Duomo, though the clerestory may be Gothic in its details, it is supported by Romanesque arches and piers—very lofty ones, it is true.

In this eastern façade, as brilliant and

¹ The architects of Gothic churches in Italy, so far as we can assign names, have generally come from north of the Alps.

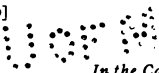
dazzling as statues, white marble, painting, and gilding can make it, there is a want of dignity in architectonic forms, a want of proportion, almost a poverty of invention, which all the profusion of brilliant ornamentation cannot conceal. Nevertheless, the excellence of some of the statues here (many of which are of high antiquity) may comfort us for much that we regret.

The celebrated pavement of this Cathedral, adorned with the *intarsiatura* peculiar to Siena, is a picture-gallery in itself, a very school of design in which the foremost artists of Siena have displayed their genius, from Domenico di Bartoli to Beccafumi. "Pavement-Masters," they have been well styled. And the school has gone on to quite recent times. Every sort of subject, from Scriptural History to Pagan Legends, has here been illustrated. There, is a "Massacre of the Innocents"; here, a "Publican and the Sinner." "Elijah" confronts a "Sibyl." (All the Sibyls are here.) An "Emperor Sigismund" is seen not far from a "Samson slaying the Philistines," while the "Seven

1904



Photo]



ST. CATHERINE.

By Neroccio di Landi.

In the Capella di San Giovanni in Siena Cathedral.

[Lombardi

To face p. 27.

Ages of Man" nearly forms a pendant to the "Story of Absalom" down to his suspension, by the hair of his head, to a delightful tree. He appears there, pierced by spears, too! Most of these famous *graffiti* are kept covered, and it is as well, for those that have been exposed to the vulgar tread have suffered, and so have been in need of continual repair and renovation.

The reader will not look in these notes for any detailed descriptions of the many works of art to be seen in the Cathedral. They have been amply treated of in the numerous guides to Siena. Here will be mentioned chiefly such subjects as the writer found of more personal interest.

The graceful Chapel of San Giovanni Battista (near the entrance to the Piccolomini Library) is, both for its own sake and for the works of art it contains, one of the chief features. It will be referred to in the notice of Pinturicchio, as decorated by him. The architect (also sculptor) was Giovanni di Stefano, who executed the very fine statue of Sant' Ansano, which occupies a conspicuous

place in the chapel. Upon the high altar of the Cathedral you will see two fine bronze angels of his.

The two greatest works of art in this chapel are Donatello's very fine bronze of "John the Baptist," and Neroccio's superb "St Catherine"; the latter so beautiful that it scarcely yields to any of the great works of the greater Della Quercia elsewhere.

To be remarked here is some of the delicate and beautiful work of Federighi, of the late Quattrocento, and, as a Renaissance artist, equal to Benedetto da Majano and Rosellino. Indeed, some of his reliefs are worthy of a Greek artist, *e.g.* the reliefs on the font, and a frieze below.

The pedestals, also, of the columns outside the chapel are of such classic beauty that you can almost believe what the Custode hastens to inform you, viz. that they come from the "Scavi" of the Roman temple, which tradition asserts stood upon this place. In the eyes of some, perhaps, another tradition—that an arm of John the Baptist rests in the Reliquary above the Donatello



Photo]

[Alinari

ST. ANSANO.
By Giovanni di Stefano.

To face p. 28.


UOY 8



statue—may be worthier of credence than this. The relic in question was presented by Pope Pius II. in 1464.

Most people will like the long row of terra-cotta busts of Popes running along the top of the nave. A similar scheme of decoration is to be seen in several of the great Italian churches. There are monuments of several Sienese Popes to be seen here, none of very great merit, but interesting because they *are* Sienese. In another part of the city, in the entrance of a palace, you will see a statue of the Borghese Pope Paul V. again. We shall remember in future that the Borghese were not noble Romans originally (as is so often asserted), but Sienese. Close to the great entrance are buried two Sienese greater even than Popes, for they fell upon the great day of Montaperto in their country's cause. Great by birth they were as well—Andrea Beccarini and Giovanni Ugurgieri. A fine bronze work, high up, near the Cappella San Battista, must be looked at, for it is one of the fine works of a distinguished early Sienese artist, Tino di Camaino. It is the tomb of

Cardinal Petroni, who died early in the Trecento. Another monument (it is in the right aisle) deserves observation. It is the tomb of another Piccolomini, a bishop, and probably by Goro di Neroccio. The Cappella del Voto erected by the Chigi Pope, Alexander VIII., close at hand, although not as beautiful as that of San Giovanni Battista, should be visited because it is famous for a Byzantine miraculous picture of the Virgin, the "Madonna degli Occhi Grossi." Its historical interest is great, for upon very great political crises the Sienese came here to invoke her aid. The chapel contains two of Bernini's best and most attractive works, "St Jerome" and "The Magdalene." Whatever may be Bernini's shortcomings, these statues are most attractive, and have the additional advantage of having been worked in marble of a singular pure and ductile nature. Eight antique columns of *verde-antico* have been added to adorn this chapel. Their history is very curious. They were saved from the great fire which destroyed the famous Church of San Paolo fuori le Mura at Rome, in the year 1823.



I imagine that they were presented to the Sienese by the Pontiff of that day, as a reward for fidelity to Rome.


They are precious to the city as mementoes of her connection with Rome, and are certainly the oldest Roman relics that she possesses, unless the "Three Graces" be more antique.

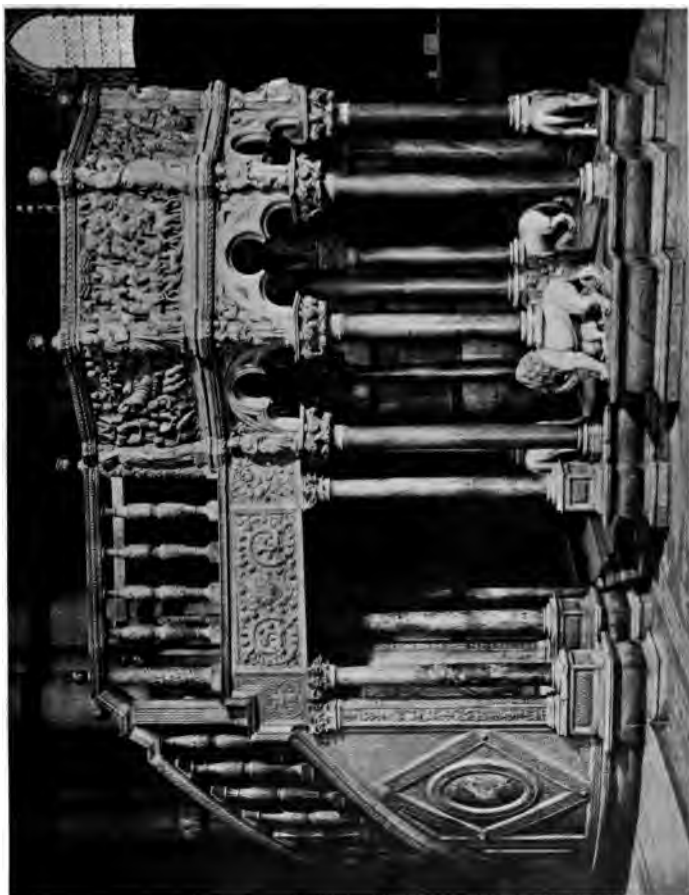
There is a fine display of bronze-work upon the high altar, and in the vicinity: a splendid tabernacle by Vecchietta; Giovanni di Stefano's angel candelabra; Francesco di Giorgio's fine statues beneath. Upon the side columns, and again upon the columns below, Beccafumi is to be seen in great force as a sculptor in bronze. Beautiful work in bronze it all is, yet there is nothing so difficult to study as bronze statues. The surfaces catch misleading lights which at certain hours confuse. Portions which you wish to study are in shadow, and the contrasts of lights and shadows are too violent—so that you must come often to find out their full beauty. For beautiful wood-carving and intarsia-work the choir-stalls must be admired. They are very good specimens of such Cinquecento

work. The intarsia-work is earlier than the carved work, but of the same century.

Whatever place may be assigned to the Siena Duomo amongst other cathedrals, it certainly possesses one unique distinction, that of having had under its roof for centuries the two chief monuments of early Christian art. The masterpiece of the father of Italian painting has been, as we have seen, removed from the high altar. The pulpit, the masterpiece of the father of Italian sculpture, Niccolò Pisano, still stands where the master placed it in the thirteenth century.

Since the dawn of Christian art, nothing so worthy had been done. It is in itself an earlier Renaissance. Niccolò's studies in classical art had induced him utterly to renounce Byzantinism, and that without any subservience to Greece or Rome. For, had he not been filled with the perception of beauty, he might have pored over Greek and Roman sarcophagi all his life through, and yet have become a mere reproducer, an imitator of what he admired. This great work is an octagon, on each face of which





Photo]

NICCOLÒ PISANO'S PULPIT IN SIENA CATHEDRAL.

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is carved a noble relief representing some event in the Life or Death of our Saviour, or, as finally, the "Last Judgment." The latter relief especially is a masterpiece, and one of the very earliest representations of the subject. The pulpit is supported by columns which spring from the bodies of the most masterly lions. Especially to be remarked are the figures of the "Virtues," and the figures between the reliefs. All are beautiful, and, amongst the latter figures, those of the "Virgin and Child" stand pre-eminent. One wonders instinctively why the early painters, at least, failed to adopt this Virgin for their type, for the statue is possessed of all the merits that sculpture has at command. I think that the "Last Judgment" *has* inspired some of the Sienese. Remark "Satan," who figures as a Satyr.

The Chapel of Sant' Ansano (close at hand) must on no account pass unobserved. For there lies the recumbent bronze statue of Bishop Pecci, executed by Donatello—a work that, had he done nothing else, would have served to immortalise his name. To

the wall of this chapel are affixed some very primitive bas-reliefs, as early and as grotesque as some we may have seen upon the porch of San Zenone at Verona. Here is a Virgin and Child quite Etruscan. It is interesting to compare it with that of Niccolò Pisano, to see how the great artist has bounded out of the earlier mediævalism. Many of the fine ancient painted windows deserve more than a superficial glance. This is a branch of art in which the Sienese formerly excelled, and of which there were, once upon a time, many more examples in this Duomo.

Before bringing these brief remarks upon the Duomo to a conclusion, the writer would recommend the reader to visit the Piccolomini Library again, and when he has satiated his admiration for Pinturicchio's glowing frescoes, to observe one or two smaller objects which may possibly have escaped his notice — the splendid choir-books, for example, dating from the fifteenth century. These are beautifully illuminated by such distinguished artists as Sano di Pietro,

Benvenuto di Giovanni, Cozzarelli, and in some instances by Liberale da Verona and Girolamo da Cremona. Another noteworthy object is the "Three Graces," an antique marble group, somewhat mutilated, said to have been found in the grounds of the Palazzo Colonna at Rome. It is one of the many gifts of Pius II. to his native city. Over the door is a very rough plaster study by Jacopo della Quercia, of the "Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise," part of his great and now ruined work, the Fontana Gaia. It is singularly inferior to the finished work.

Note a bronze statue here, under the window. It is of the "Risen Saviour." Beneath the foot is inscribed the artist's name (so far as I could decipher it), "Signorini." It is a fine work, whoever may be the artist. It is curious to learn—in this frescoed hall, of all places in Siena—that Pope Pius II. was greatly averse from the execution of frescoes upon walls, and discouraged that branch of art so far as he could. And yet he has been immortalised in that way, and, strangely enough, by his own nephew!

The Baptistery is really a part of the Cathedral, for it is built beneath the Duomo choir, and does duty as its western façade. There is no interior communication (for the public, at all events) between the two fabrics, and thus the Cathedral finds itself in the position (an unique one, I imagine) of having no western entrance whatever. The Baptistery, moreover, is built upon the western slope of the hill on which the Duomo stands, and thus you have to make a descent of several feet in order to arrive at the entrance door of the former building.

Upon leaving the Duomo, with that object in view, you will pass through a fine Gothic door, with statues of our Saviour and angels above, which was to have been the western door of the abandoned Cathedral. The façade (A.D. 1370), attributed to Mino del Pellicciaio, is in every way fine, simple, and harmonious, and even reposeful, after the rather obtrusive splendours of the Duomo façade. Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio was a painter as well as an architect (like many of the artists of that epoch). A beautiful picture of his, the

“Madonna del Belvedere,” is in the Church of the Servi. The original design by him of the façade of the Baptistery is preserved in the Opera del Duomo. The great “sight” in this beautifully frescoed church is the Baptismal Font of Jacopo della Quercia. It is one of the greatest productions of the fifteenth century, and there, directly in front of you as you enter, stands this great work upon which so much genius has been expended. Think how Lorenzo Ghiberti with all the blushing honours of another Baptistery thick upon his brow, the Donatello, also of Florence, the Turini (of Siena), and finally Jacopo della Quercia, himself the designer of the Font, all met together and combined in noble rivalry to evolve this priceless monument! What a blaze of genius — Florentines and Sienese, this time, contesting in no unfriendly strife! Does it not bring home to us the marvellous fecundity, the profuseness, of the Italian genius, that so many artists of the first rank should have been contemporaries in those brilliant years of the Quattrocento—that they should be found

working together shoulder to shoulder in such noble emulation? These six reliefs of gilded bronze, which are the works of the masters above-named, chiefly relate (it scarcely needs mention) the "History of the Baptist." All are so fine that it sounds almost patronising to criticise. Ghiberti is responsible for "John before Herod," and the even more beautiful "Baptism of Christ." Donatello's "Herod's Feast" is equally fine, and the action of it surprisingly so. Donatello executed the lovely "Faith" and "Hope." Giovanni Turini did the "Justice" and "Prudence" which support Jacopo's only relief, that of the "Vision of Zacharias." The "Birth of the Baptist" is by the Turini (a remarkably gifted family), and "Fortitude" is by Goro di Neroccio.

The reliefs of the "Prophets" are by Della Quercia, who shone in this department of art (as the reliefs at Bologna exemplify); by Donatello, as also are two or three of the bronze infants; and by Giovanni Turini, who also executed the "Madonna" on the tabernacle. (I seem to have heard a rumour



Photo]

THE FONT IN THE BAPTISTERY, SIENA.

[Alinari



To face p. 38.

1875



that a "Putto" by Donatello was carried off hence once upon a time and was heard of at Paris! I give the rumour for what it is worth, but am unable to verify the report.)

Jacopo della Quercia puts the finishing stroke (as is only just for the great designer) in the statuette of John the Baptist, upon the summit of the Font. I imagine that all male children who are brought here for Baptism are called "Giovanni." But what a proud privilege to have been christened here! Surely no child of whatever sex could ever have here lifted up a voice in remonstrance! Surely to be baptized here makes each "Giovanni" specially Christian for life!

It is more than worth while, on coming away from the Baptistery, to step into the Monagnese Church (just at the top of the stairs which were descended after the visit to the Duomo, or to the Opera del Duomo). For in this small and, I think, disused church there is one of the finest statues in Siena,—that is, if it has returned there from the Mostra of 1904, held in the Palazzo Pubblico. It is of wood and painted, but

beyond words masterly, of noble simplicity, and of a sort of holy and benevolent dignity. The subject is St. Nicholas (I presume of Bari). For many years it was assigned to Neroccio, but now, by the latest authorities, it is restored to Jacopo della Quercia. That restoration is, one is glad to know, the only one this fine statue has had to endure.

CHAPTER III

OTHER CHURCHES IN SIENA

Few of the Churches in Siena need be visited for their own sake, but rather for the works of art—paintings, statues—which they contain, most of which will be noted in other chapters of this book. Only those things which are not alluded to later need be referred to here.

It is rather noteworthy how few fine churches Siena can boast of. I suppose that the Sienese devoted so much attention to the Duomo and to the Baptistery that they did not think it necessary to build upon a large scale, especially as each Contrada was already in possession of a church or chapel. Another reason, too, might be given: that the decreasing population rendered any further church accommodation undesirable. Churches dedicated to that

great saint, San Francesco, are generally very large, lofty, massive, and simple. A spacious nave, with chapels upon either side, and without aisles, is a general characteristic of all. That of Siena does not differ from the type. It is of the early fourteenth century, or rather was, for it has been almost wholly destroyed by fire, and then rebuilt upon the former lines. The site is very fine, and the views thence are delightful. The group, too, of conventual buildings, of which the great church forms the most prominent feature, gives this portion of Siena a pre-eminently mediæval character. The Oratorio di San Bernardino, the Seminario, and the chapel of San Gherardo, sites touched upon later for frescoes and pictures, are of the group.

Passing through the Cloister of the Seminario, the Custode will conduct you through a corridor to what is known as the "Belvedere." Hence you can gaze at the historical fields where Montaperto was fought out, and at the Castello di Quattro Torri. A splendid view indeed! There are

still portions of frescoes upon the walls of San Francesco, and much more than mere remains upon the first and last chapels on the left, by the brothers Lorenzetti. Pietro's work, a "Crucifixion," has been preserved at the price of a very harsh restoration. Ambrogio's works — two frescoes from the life of San Francesco—have been far more fortunate, and are still worthy examples of the great artist's powers. I thought also a "Virgin Enthroned," an early work, in the last chapel, excessively beautiful, but by what artist it is I know not.

In the choir are two interesting busts of the parents of Pio Secondo. They are the solitary remains of the monument erected to their memory by that Pope. I imagine the rest of the work to have been destroyed in the fire of 1655.

The sweet, sonorous chimes of this church are most attractive. Nowhere in Tuscany have I heard bells more melodious.

The Church of San Cristoforo, in the Terzo di Camollia, an ancient and most historical building, is opposite the fine Palazzo Tolomei.

Built and endowed by that great family, it is their sepulchre, and possibly still their property. It has now been entirely modernised. It contains Del Pacchia's fine altarpicture of the "Virgin and Child, St. Luke, and the Beato Raimondo"; a terra-cotta "St. Galgano"—perhaps by Federighi—and a most masterly and very early "St. George and the Dragon" (attributed to a "mythical Salvanello," says Conrado Ricci). A more terrifying dragon has never been limned by human hand; his talons are as innumerable as his eyes.

The Church of San Martino is in the Terzo of that name, and close to the great Piazza. Observe the fine "Nativity" of Beccafumi, enclosed in a splendid marble frame, the work of the distinguished artist Marrina. A fifteenth-century painted window over the choir represents one of the legends of San Martino.

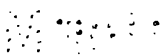
But to be remarked before anything here are the wooden statues of the Madonna, St. John the Baptist, and three of the apostles—all works of Della Quercia—and a second



Photo]

THE MADONNA AND CHILD WITH FOUR SAINTS.
By Jacopo della Quercia.
In the Church of San Martino, Siena.

[Alinari



"John the Baptist" by Cozzarelli. As a historical record, remark in the entrance to the church Lorenzo Cini's picture of the "Victory of the Camollia Gate." The artist fought in that battle.

The Church of the Misericordia is chiefly remarkable for three statues: Sant' Antonio Abate (perhaps by Cozzarelli), the Virgin, and the Angel Gabriel, probably by an earlier artist.

The Church of San Niccolò belongs to the disestablished monastery of that name, near the Porta Romana. Remark four medallions by the Della Robbias, a very ancient crucifix, and a Madonna by Sano.

In *Santa Maria degli Angeli*, a pretty and very ancient church without the walls, some hundred yards from the Porta Romana, do not fail to see an unusually beautiful picture of the Virgin and Child, in a finely carved frame by Barili. It is by a Florentine painter, Raffaello di Carlo. (The Custode is under the impression that it is by *the* Raphael.)

The Church of Santuccio, or *San Galgano*, belonging to the Santuccio Convent, is near

the San Niccolò Church. Here is a magnificent reliquary (containing the head of San Galgano—at all events executed for its reception). It is of octagonal shape, Gothic in design, and worked in relief in the most masterly fashion. It was made by Lando di Pietro (died 1340), and of its kind is quite unsurpassed. Here are also two fine painted wooden statues by Giovanni Turini — the Madonna and the Angel Gabriel.

The Church of San Sebastiano, also known as the “Innocenti.” Not far from the Piazza di San Giovanni Battista, this church should be seen, as it is by far the best specimen of a Renaissance church in Siena. It is also the chapel of the Contrada della Selva. (The day upon which the writer went there he had the pleasure of witnessing the banner, just carried off by that Contrada at the annual Palio, being hung up in the chapel.) The church is in the form of a Greek cross. The interior is frescoed throughout by late artists, and though not of the first order, they have carried out the work very effectively. A certain Pietro Sorri is responsible for the

frescoes above and round about the high altar, and they are very good of their kind.

Other works there are: an "Adoration of the Magi," by Astolfo Peruzzi, a "Crucifixion," by Rutilio Manetti, and the remaining frescoes by Il Pisano and Raffaello Vanni. There are some older paintings in the sacristy which have greater names attached to them, but seem poor for those names.

Opposite the finely situated church of *Sant' Agostino* (the paintings in this church will be described in the notes upon the Sienese artists), there is a very small church, that of *Santa Mustiola* (whoever she may have been), which contains one of the quaintest and most pleasing pictures in the city. It is a Madonna¹ in company with the protector-saints of the shoemakers — Saints Crispin and Crispinian,—holding the emblems of the Guild.

I know not if this Crispin be our St. Crispin (*vide* the "Henry V." of Shakespeare).

Nevertheless, we must return to Sant'

¹ It is said to have been painted by Andrea di Niccolò in the early sixteenth century.

Agostino for a moment, because there are two wooden statues which have not yet come under investigation: one is a fine "San Niccolò of Tolentino"; the other (coloured) is a "Madonna." I do not consider the latter of great value, but as it is considered to be by a contemporary of Della Quercia, it should be noticed. The "San Niccolò" here is attributed to Cozzarelli, an artist whose fame is less than his great talents deserve.

The Church of the Osservanza, about two miles outside the Porta Ovale, stands upon a beautiful site on the hill. It was built by Giacomo Cozzarelli¹ in 1485 upon San Bernardino's Hermitage. The Monastery here still contains several Frati. Besides the many fine pictures (for the most part to be described) which it contains, there are several objects which should be seen. Foremost is a splendid reliquary containing relics of San Bernardino, made by Francesco d'Antonio, circa 1467.

¹ This Cozzarelli, sculptor and architect, must not be mistaken for Guidoccio Cozzarelli, painter, and a pupil of M. di Giovanni.

On both sides of the high altar are very fine statues, "The Madonna," and "The Angel of the Annunciation," probably of the Della Robbia school. In the sacristy, observe a "Pietà," in terra-cotta, by Cozzarelli. Another statue by the same artist in one of the chapels is that of St. Antony of Padua.

Over the second altar is a splendid Andrea della Robbia, "The Coronation of the Virgin." Pandolfo Petrucci, the celebrated Tyrant of Siena (a great patron of Pinturicchio, Signorelli, and Genga, by the way), chose this church for his sepulchre. His tomb was adorned by two most beautiful works by Cozzarelli: "The Magdalene" and "St John the Evangelist" (now removed). To follow up some other works of this artist, it may be remarked *en passant* that there are two fine works of his in the Santo Spirito Church: "San Vincenzo Ferreri," and "St. Catherine of Siena." (The cupola of Santo Spirito is also by him.)

Probably two-thirds of the visitors to Siena come almost as pilgrims to the shrines and chapels of Catherine Benincasa, the most

famous of Italian female saints. She is said to have been the twenty-fourth child in the family Benincasa. She lived not far from the Fonte Branda—gate and fountain—half-way up the street which is now called by the name of her family. She may be said to have been born beneath the shade of the huge Church of San Domenico, which stands on a spur overlooking all this portion of the city, and which in after-times was in so many ways to commemorate her fame, and to give shelter to her canonised bones. The house of St. Catherine has been made into an oratory chiefly—some of the rooms and the garden into chapels. The chapel fronting on the street is that of the Contrada dell' Oca, and possesses the proud privilege of sheltering Neroccio's greatest creation in sculpture. The bust of the Saint over the door is by Cozzarelli. There are here several frescoes by Girolamo del Pacchia (it is said) of scenes in her life. Other scenes of her life are depicted in the second oratory (above the stairs) by Franchi. These are poor, prosaic, and pretentious.

Here is the site of her humble cell. From its window she is said to have handed bread to her poor people. In her humility she preferred a pillow of bricks. *That* is shown to you, as well as many personal relics, such as her lantern for visiting the hospital at night, pieces of her hair-shirt, and above all, the very sack in which her head travelled from Rome! Her head, it will be remembered, is preserved most sacredly in her chapel in San Domenico. Above the altar is a picture of her (by Cozzarelli) receiving the "Stigmata." Above, again, there is a most graceful small Loggia attributed to Baldassarre Peruzzi, and a beautiful little relief upon a wall, said to have been executed by no less an artist than Jacopo della Quercia. On the left there is the chapel of the "Confraternità di Santa Caterina" (which was the kitchen), with more scenes from her life by later artists. Another "Stigmatization" of the saint, over the altar, with other saints (fine work) is by Fungai. This chapel has some good mediæval tiling. One more Oratory (on the

opposite side of the little courtyard) must be seen. It is that of the "SS. Crocifisso," and is most remarkable, because here is *the* Crucifix, formerly in the Church of Santa Cristina at Pisa, beneath which the saint is said to have received those wonderful and much-discussed Stigmata.

Near this most interesting group of chapels, and up a very steep street, you may reach the Biblioteca in the Via delle Belle Arti, where you may see some treasures of literature: missals, illuminated by Sano di Pietro, Giovanni di Paolo, and other famous hands; and a Greek Gospel of the fourteenth century, splendidly bound in silver-gilt, with fine enamels in relief of Byzantine type. Not least in interest are the sketch-books of artists like Francesco di Giorgio, Peruzzi, and Girolamo di San Gallo. Remark, too, the fine porch of the Library, with its interesting carvings and inscriptions; especially the sculptured badges of three Guilds: Stone-cutters Shoe-makers, and Barbers; one of the shields going as far back as the fourteenth century.

The Church of Santa Maria della Scala stands immediately on the left of the entrance to the Ospedale della Scala of which it is the only *Chapel*, I think, "above ground." It is not an especially interesting church in itself, yet as it contains Vecchietta's finest bronze work, "The Risen Saviour," it should be visited. This statue shows strongly the influence of Donatello in his most realistic moments. It is an intensely pathetic figure, suggestive of our Saviour in one of the darkest hours of His life, rather than at the triumphant moment of His Resurrection. Given the conception of the artist, there can be no question as to the immensely vigorous execution. There are some huge modern frescoes in the tribune, by Conca, not bad of their kind, and with some fanciful effects of perspective as you approach or recede.

The organ is a splendid piece of architectural design, executed by Baldassarre Peruzzi.

The vast conglomeration of buildings forming the Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala occupies the south-westerly portion of the

Piazza del Duomo. It is the most venerable of the great architectural monuments of the city, and in historical interest almost rivals the Palazzo Pubblico itself. It was founded by the Canons of the Duomo (an earlier Duomo, it is to be presumed), as far back as the eleventh century, for the benefit of the poor, as a lodging for pilgrims, and finally as a hospital.

In a city so often plague-stricken and ravaged by battle as Siena, we may imagine what scenes of suffering, of noble self-devotion, of inexhaustible charity and sympathy these walls have witnessed. Here it was that St. Catherine dedicated the greater portion of her noble life to the relief of the suffering and the stricken. At night, especially, for many years she might have been seen, lantern in hand, ascending the steep inclines that led from her humble dwelling to the Ospedale della Scala.

Beneath the hospital, the chapel of "Santa Caterina della Notte" commemorates the spot where she was accustomed to offer up prayers for the sick whom she had been

tending, and where at times she snatched an hour of repose when wearied out by her ceaseless labours.

There are several other chapels of similar confraternities in these secluded, dark, and echoing vaults, in which still exist decaying frescoes—dim, half-obliterated pictures, which at least attest the sanctity of these antique corridors, if we can no longer recognise clearly the handicraft of the artists who executed them. Here, however, was but lately to be seen the “St. Catherine and Pope Gregory,” a beautiful work of Benvenuto di Giovanni. It has now been removed to another site, where its merits can be better studied. Two other great societies are established within these walls—the “Deposito delle Donne” and the “Esecutori delle Pie Disposizioni.” Both are possessed of art-treasures of many kinds and of more than ordinary value.

Besides pictures, and gates of wrought iron (of famous designs and workmanship), there will be found in these valuable collections many specimens of all the crafts in which

the Sienese of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries excelled: brazier-tripods, heads of saints in gilt-bronze (either votive-offerings or for the adornment of chapels), tabernacles (one of them by T. di Bartolo), sacramental plate, church-vestments, masterly carvings, *e.g.* for bier heads, and organ fittings, and finally precious reliquaries, two of which may be specified. One is a triptych of very fine work in crystal and gold, attributed to Fungai, the only instance, I imagine, of that painter appearing as a goldsmith; and the other work is a most curious gauntleted-arm, with the hand outstretched, displaying an embroidered "stigma." This is of silver, and is assigned to Goro di Neroccio.

CHAPTER IV

PALACES AND FAMOUS HOUSES

FINE palaces and houses are innumerable in Siena. It would not be possible to visit a quarter of them, nor would it be desirable, for in most of them there is nothing left to admire. Most of them have long passed away from the families of those who built them, and, in general, serve for other purposes than those which the old proprietors had in view. Many of them have often changed their names; some are undistinguished by any names at all, and the present occupants are not acquainted with those which their houses formerly bore. Outwardly, the houses generally preserve their mediæval character, so that the visitor's eyes are always pleased as he pursues his investigations in the streets of this most beautiful of all cities.

If the Gothic proper was never in its entirety adopted for ecclesiastical architecture, the Sienese architects were unanimously in favour of the style for domestic purposes. In one or two of the oldest palaces (the Palazzo Tolomei, for example) we find that travertine was the material chiefly in favour. But this mode of construction seems to have been soon abandoned for that of brick and stone, when, early in the fourteenth century, or possibly at the end of the thirteenth, the building of the Palazzo Pubblico was undertaken. This new style, naturally, became more or less the accepted type, and so we find the Palaces Saracini, Grottanelli, and many others following suit.

How well and substantially the architects of those times could build is proved by the durability of their buildings; and when in the lapse of ages renovations and repairs became necessary, Siena was fortunate enough to find builders imbued with the same spirit, and capable of following in the footsteps of their predecessors. This may partly account for the small progress made in the city by

the architects of the Renaissance. Notwithstanding the strong predilection for the new architecture evinced by Baldassarre Peruzzi (a most capable artist), he has left little in Siena that can be looked upon as tending to modify in any degree the preference of the Sienese for the Gothic style.

Yet one building there is in Siena which is a magnificent example of Renaissance architecture. That is the Palazzo Piccolomini (del Governo), and *that* was "architected" by the Florentine Rossellino.

The Piccolomini, as we shall see in the sphere of painting, were not averse from summoning aid from without in the furtherance of their objects. That family was fortunate in finding an architect possessed of such grand capacity. For I do not know where in Italy we can look for a masterpiece of construction, and for excellence in all the details of building, superior to this palace.

It is now the property of the Government, and in some of its countless and spacious apartments are stored the archives of the

city—going back, I believe, to the almost incredible date of the eighth century. Documents of all kinds—manifestoes, deeds, papal bulls, commentaries, letters—are piled upon innumerable shelves, bewildering in their number, but not confusing to the expert; all admirably arranged, ticketed, and labelled, and ready to hand for the information of the past and future historians of Siena.

An old Bersagliere—Scatoli by name—keeps watch and ward over this ocean of MSS., which in less capable and energetic hands might become a maelstrom of confusion. There is no one like an old soldier for order, method, and capability. And this gallant ex-soldier, who not only served fifty years ago in the Crimea, but also under Garibaldi, and finished his military career in the storming of the Porta Pia at Rome in 1870 (when he was seriously wounded), shows no diminution of intelligence or energy. He will show you the “Letters of Saint Catherine,” if you ask him; but he is not entirely satisfied that she knew how

to write at all. It is in this palace, also, that is preserved that unique collection known as the "Tavolette Dipinte" "della Biccherna" and "della Gabella" — offices connected with the revenues and expenditure of the State. The book-covers in many instances have been adorned and painted by some of Siena's foremost artists. But Mr William Heywood of Siena has so charmingly and exhaustively treated this subject in his "Pictorial Chronicle," that no writer or annotator would be justified in attempting to do more than briefly refer to this collection.

The fine Loggia del Papa (close here), must be observed as a good specimen of Federighi's talents (*circa* 1462). It was, as its name denotes, built for Pius II. The street (Via Ricasoli) in which it stands is full of beautiful palaces. Another Renaissance palace may here be instanced (near the Baptistery). It is known as "del Magnifico." The "Magnifico" was Pandofo Petruccio (the Sienese Medici). This palace was built by Giacomo Cozzarelli. It is sadly neglected

now, and has been much "banged about"; but it is still vast and imposing, and is noteworthy, if it were only for the beautiful iron-work of the torchholders, which have been allowed to remain in their places. These fine works, which in any other city would have been swept into the all-embracing net of the art-dealer, are also by Cozzarelli. Another Loggia, erected quite one hundred and fifty years before the Loggia del Papa, and situated in that portion of the main thoroughfare which at this point assumes the name of Croce del Travaglio, deserves particular notice. For it is not only a very picturesque building of the early fourteenth century, but is adorned by statues and other works of art. It is known as the "Loggia di Mercanzia," having been erected by the Sienese "Guild of Merchants." It has also been subsequently styled "Loggia dei Nobili" and "Loggia degli Uniti." It now serves as a club.

The statues adorning the piers are none of them very remarkable as art works, but as they are by two of the best sculptors of their day, —Vecchietta and Federighi—it is interesting

to contrast their respective styles. Those of St. Peter and St. Paul are by the former artist; the three Saints—Victor, Ansanus, and Savinus—by the latter. Vecchietta has thought more of bringing out the character of his subjects, while Federighi has chiefly concerned himself with clothing his saints in effective draperies.

The finely sculptured marble seats on either side of the Loggia also deserve remark. One is by Federighi, and the other by Marrina, or Da Cortona. Beyond this Loggia, beautiful palaces are thick upon both sides of the street. At the corner of the Via dei Pellegrini—the very type of a Gothic feudal palace—stands the Podestà or Bargello (now given over to a photographer), of stone below and brick above.

Then, upon the left is the Palazzo Elci, famous for a small “Bacchus” by Federighi, which the artist worked so faithfully in the antique style, that it was once accepted as such.

The Palazzo Saracini (a little further on), has a fine collection of pictures, hereafter to

be noticed. It contains also many other works of art, notably some beautiful majolica, and in the private chapel a fine "Crucifixion," probably by Sodoma. It is a grand and stately palace, with a courtyard and numerous apartments of all shapes and sizes, worthy of housing the great family, which has but lately become extinct. An inscription outside commemorates the services of the last proprietor in the wars of the last century. The house has passed, in the female line, to another great Sienese family, the Chigi, and is now styled Chigi-Saracini.

Again, upon the opposite side, stands another notable palace, the Nerucci (now the Banca d'Italia). It was built by the sister of Pius II. It is wholly of stone, and in some respects reminds you of some palaces at Venice.

At the corner of the Piazza di Postierla, a little way further on, is the stone tower of the Forteguerri, another great family.

The palace opposite is also of stone, and bears the crest of the Borghese, so it probably was the residence of that family

which gave a Pope to Rome in the person of Paul V.

In this Piazza di Postierla, tenanted by fine palaces, is one of the Grottanelli, notable for a fine fifteenth-century ceiling (on the ground-floor). To be remarked in this Piazza is one of the many columns in Siena, supporting the proud Roman badge of the "Wolf and Twins." In the Via del Capitano (leading up to the Duomo), much to be remarked, is another Grottanelli palace, formerly known as that of the Capitano di Guerra.

At the end of the street is the Palazzo Reale, an unpleasing reminder for the Sienese of their servitude to Florence. It was built for the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

Chigi and Piccolomini are still the ruling names in Siena. I do not know how many palaces there may be so called, but certainly there are very many—doubtless many more than accuracy warrants. But so many of the original names having disappeared, the inhabitants boldly supply their defective memory by answering your enquiries with

the magic names of the most prominent families known to them.

In the Via di Stalloreggi (a portion really of the Via di Città) there are some still more ancient houses to be seen—No. 4 especially.

Abutting on the Arco delle due Porte (near this street) is the house (or rather the site of the old house) in which Duccio painted his "Majestas." The house bears an inscription. Those who are desirous of acquainting themselves with some of the most picturesque and ancient houses of the city should give up a day to the Via di Calzoleria and the Vicolo del Rè, and other streets in rear generally of the Church of San Cristoforo.

Many of these ancient dwellings are thought to have been in the possession of the Tolomei family, who (as already noted) once owned the Church of San Cristoforo opposite their fine old palace. In the Via del Rè is to be seen the Angiolieri Tower, once a stronghold of that ancient and powerful family. In the Vicolo del Castellare several buildings of venerable date served a like purpose

for another powerful clan — the Ugurgieri. In the Via dei Rossi, hard by, which leads down to San Francesco, are many houses and objects which repay notice, *e.g.*, the former Palazzo Ruspoli — now an inn; the Trattoria del Sasso, with a pretty marble Madonna over the door; and No. 20, in the same street, with a most picturesque old fourteenth-century staircase. Note, too, although of far different architecture, the Casa Sallustio-Bandini in the street of the same name (a continuation of the Via del Rè). As for other instances of Renaissance houses, near the Porta San Marco on the west of the city is the Via Baldassarre Peruzzi, which, as its name suggests, has one or two fine buildings by that architect, *e.g.*, the Palazzo Celsi-Pollini, just opposite the Carmine Church, and No. 28, in the same street, also called Palazzo Levina.

CHAPTER V

SIENESE ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

IN these sister-arts Siena was very late in coming to the front. Rome, Pisa, Lucca, Florence, and many other Italian cities were centuries in advance of her. Although certain palaces, which we see still standing (notably the Palazzo Pubblico and the Palazzo Tolomei, amongst others), may have been erected towards the latter part of the twelfth century, the Duomo itself was not commenced until the year 1243.

It is true that before that date the Abbey of San Galgano (*circa* 1218), in the vicinity of Siena, had been commenced, as well as two Lombard - Romanesque churches: Santa Maria di Bethlem, and Santa Chiara in the city, which may have been completed a

century earlier; but the lateness of Sienese architecture is, nevertheless, very apparent.

We hear of an Artistic Guild in Siena, of a certain company known as "Maestri di Pietra," in the first years of the thirteenth century, as concerning themselves indifferently with architecture and sculpture. We may suppose, therefore, that sculpture was looked upon in Siena, as elsewhere, as a subordinate branch of the greater art, and that the workmen were competent to exercise either of the two arts, which they regarded as interchangeable. Thus it would seem that the artist who furnished a design for a great architectural work was not then looked upon as a much greater man than the mere handicraft man, who might, when occasion offered, be found as competent as the designer. If this were so, one is not surprised to learn how many names have perished, and amongst the numbers, that of the architect of the Duomo. We do not, indeed, meet with any authentic name until the end of the thirteenth century, when Camaino di Crescentino, the builder of the Fonte Nuova (*circa* 1298),

held the position of chief architect of the Duomo, which had been commenced some sixty years previously.

His son, Tino di Camaino, held the same position, but it seems that he worked chiefly elsewhere.

Then comes Angelo di Ventura, who was employed upon the Porta Tufi and Porta Romana.

It is strange that Lorenzo di Maitano, who is credited with the beautiful façade of Orvieto Cathedral, should not have created any great work in Siena. It has been mentioned that this architect was consulted when the Sienese contemplated the creation of a still greater cathedral, in 1339; but to Lando di Pietro the work, which at first rapidly progressed, was really entrusted.

In chronological order the next name that attracts attention is that of Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio, who executed the fine façade of the Baptistery. But yet the fact remains that most of the architects to whom we can assign names were employed chiefly out of Siena. We cannot even find names for the

sculptors of the statuary upon the façade of the Duomo, and of some of the fine works of art preserved in the Opera del Duomo, *e.g.*, figures of apostles and angels, mouldings and reliefs—of no ordinary merit, and evidently of great antiquity. Nicolò Pisano was not successful in founding a school at Siena, supposing that he had been desirous of doing so. Thus it is that Siena cannot be said to have possessed a great sculptor of her own until late in the fourteenth century, when suddenly, and without any warning, Jacopo della Quercia (1367), fully armed and equipped, leapt into sight, somewhat like Athene from the head of Zeus.

We shall see in the instance of the Font in the Baptistery how Jacopo surrounded himself with a choice band of disciples—Sienese and Florentine—to assist him in carrying out his own masterly design.

He had previously been a competitor with Ghiberti and others for the execution of the famous Bronze Gates of the Florentine Baptistery. It is probable that the numerous statues of wood—to which reference has

been made—which adorn many of the Sienese churches, may have been executed by him before he commenced (by the order of the Commune) the famous Fonte Gaia, which even in ruin remains a magnificent monument to his fame.

Jacopo was occupied ten years in the accomplishment of this grand undertaking, for which he received the unusually large sum of about fifty thousand francs. It is greatly to be regretted that the inferior quality of the marble employed (from the Montagnola) should have been one of the causes of the premature decay of so noble a work.

About forty-seven years ago it was wisely decided to lose no further time in rescuing what still remained of these rapidly decaying sculptures, and to remove them from the Piazza del Campo to a place of shelter. They are now exposed to view in the splendid Loggia of the Palazzo Pubblico. Shattered and mutilated as they are, these fine works impress you far more than any other sculptures of the period, by the magnificence of

their conception, combined with a startling boldness of execution.

There is throughout a massive and stately beauty, a sureness of hand, and a certain spaciousness of treatment, worthy of Phidias himself. For such qualities, especially, the fine "Charity" (or "Rhea Silvia") has become proverbial. The "Sapienza," too, is a magnificent conception. (Jacopo has reproduced her head in one of his statues of wood.) The "Speranza" also is a figure as noble as the "Sapienza." The once great "Fortitude" has become nearly irreconisable. The "Creation of Man" and the "Expulsion from Paradise," although not uninjured, still remain consummate.

Like many other of the earlier sculptors, Jacopo seems to have transferred his talents to other Italian cities—to Bologna especially, where, upon the entrance door of San Petronio, the exhibition of his genius is, in its way, equal to that of the Fonte Gaia.

At Lucca, also, in the exquisite recumbent statue of Ilaria del Carretto, which is enhanced by the extraordinary beauty of the surrounding frieze of the "Putti" with garlands, he has

far surpassed all previous works of the kind, and has made subsequent rivalry impossible. It is said that this statue was an early work, perhaps executed about the same time that he made his lovely Madonna (wood) of the Contrada della Pantera.

A series of casts of all his known works was displayed in Siena in 1904. Admirably executed, and disposed to the best advantage as they were, it was the first time that his fellow-citizens became acquainted with the rare powers of this extraordinary sculptor.

It is at the period of Jacopo that we should naturally have expected to witness the rise of a great school of sculptors in Siena. But though he gathered round him a certain number of able men to assist him in his works, it cannot be said that his mantle descended upon any one of them—certainly not in Siena, for Matteo Civitali, his best pupil, and the one most influenced by him, worked in Lucca.

The Turini family, consisting of the father and three sons (they have been mentioned as contributing two of the bas-reliefs upon

the Baptistry Font), worked both in marble and bronze, but cannot be credited with any works of magnitude. Perhaps the "Wolf and Twins" on the column in front of the Palazzo Pubblico is the best specimen of Giovanni Turini's powers. It is very imposing and masterly, the wolf herself being stupendous.

To Giovanni has also been attributed a beautiful holy-water receptacle in the Palazzo Pubblico (outside the chapel). Barna, a brother of Giovanni, seems also to have been an artist in wood-carving.

The seats in the Sala della Balia in the Palazzo Pubblico are his work. Some of the reliefs of the Four Evangelists, in the Cappella del Sacramento in the Duomo, are Giovanni's; and also a holy-water basin in the sacristy of the same building.

Neroccio, Vecchietta, and Giovanni di Stefano have all been mentioned as having contributed at least one great work in the history of Sienese sculpture; but none of them can be distinctly pointed out as having taken Jacopo as a model. To

Francesco di Giorgio, although eminent in all branches of art, no genuine work in architecture can be assigned. His beautiful bronze statues in the Duomo have been referred to. Antonio Federighi (1444-1490), both as sculptor and architect, was certainly the most prominent amongst those who worked after Jacopo's period. His great ability has been mentioned in noticing his exquisite Renaissance work upon the columns outside the Cappella di San Giovanni, in the Duomo. Most masterly work, also, is that of his holy-water stoup near the entrance of the cathedral. His "Moses," formerly standing in the Ghetto, is now on the Palazzo Pubblico stairs. Although small in size, it is grand in idea, and boldly and vigorously executed—rather influenced here by Jacopo, I should say.

Both the small and very pretty churches, Santa Maria della Neve, and that abutting upon the so-called Palazzo dei Turchi (without the Porta Camollia), attest to Federighi's worth as architect.

The frieze (of terra-cotta) of the latter being

a replica of that round the Cappella della Piazza, Federighi is also credited with having been one of the architects of the Palazzo Nerucci in the Via di Città.

Federighi must also be noticed as the artist of the "Seven Ages of Man," upon the Duomo Pavement — one of the finest of the series. (The original design is preserved in the Opera del Duomo.)

Lorenzo di Mariano (1476 - 1534), is commonly known as Marrina. An artist of great skill, grace, and refinement, he is the last of the prominent sculptors and carvers.

Marrina chiefly, if not wholly, limited his talents to the production of marble works of decoration and ornamentation, the chief of which are to be seen in the churches of San Martino, San Girolamo, and Fontegiusta: viz., the large and beautiful frame enclosing Beccafumi's "Nativity" in the church first-named, and the reredos of Fontegiusta. The last-named is a triumph of Renaissance sculpture — a small temple with columns and frieze and pediment. In profusion of detail, and boldness of execution,

it surpasses any similar work in Siena. The bronze tabernacle in the same church is also by Marrina. Fine carvings and arabesque-work outside the Cappella di San Giovanni in the Duomo, and round the door of the Piccolomini Library, are Marrina's likewise; and so are some of the richly-carved capitals of the columns in the courtyard of the Piccolomini Palace.

Wood-carving is another of the arts that attained a great excellence in Siena, and that to a late period. In this branch the two Barilis are the foremost names. Of these artists the best extant examples are the organ decorations above the Duomo sacristy; those executed for the Palazzo del Magnifico; and the choir-book-shelves in the Piccolomini Library.

Antonio (the elder Barili) was an adept in the carving of tabernacles, of picture-frames, and of chests and coffers, lavishly ornamented with the intricacies of the best Renaissance designs. Some of his most celebrated works of the kind are in the possession of the Seminario Arcivescovile

of Siena. One, at least, of Beccafumi's "Holy Families," is enshrined in, and much enhanced by, Barili's most delicate framework.

In the Church of the Contrada dell' Onda is a very remarkable chancel-gate, or screen of wood, which, if not Barili's own, might fairly be attributed to the best of his followers. The *grille* itself is studiously simple in design, and yet being set in panels of such masterly carving, and being surmounted by four cherubims bearing candelabra of most admirable execution, it may be pronounced to be the best example of the school of that period.

In this short *resumé* of the Arts of Siena, it would be a grave omission to leave unnoticed the beautiful works executed by her goldsmiths, silversmiths, and by her artists in bronze and iron.


Last year's Mostra (1904) brought from long concealment in church, or palace, many a reliquary and crucifix; bells and ostensarii, exquisitely-wrought chalices, censers, candelabra, and sacramental plate. Such an

accumulation of artistic treasures, although perhaps not undreamed of by the people of Siena, certainly came as a surprise to the foreigner. In general you have a great difficulty in hunting out such precious objects; for, if they be not wholly inaccessible, they are by no means obtruded upon the public eye.

The old Sienese goldsmiths of the fourteenth, and even of the thirteenth, centuries, were, like the architects, in great request in Italian cities other than Siena.

That very Lando di Pietro, himself an architect (and already mentioned as such), was one of the earliest and most capable of the Sienese goldsmiths (died 1340). He fashioned the splendid octagonal reliquary of San Galgano, preserved in the Chiesa del Santuccio. He is credited, too, with having made a crown of gold for the coronation of the Emperor Henry VII.

An equally great name as goldsmith is that of Ugolino di Vieri, employed, it would seem, chiefly in other cities: viz., at Orvieto and at Frusino. He made for the cathedral at Orvieto, a delicate and very beautiful



May





Photo]

[Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche

THE RELIQUARY IN THE CHURCH OF THE OSSERVANZA.

By Francesco d'Antonio.

To face p. 81.

Gothic reliquary, and an equally beautiful reliquary for Frusino, of twenty - four medallions, each to contain some relic.

Francesco d'Antonio, whose name is not inferior to those of Lando and Ugolino, worked in the middle of the fifteenth century. His chief reliquary is in the form of a casket, surmounted by a sacramental chalice, supported by two angels (in the Church of the Osservanza, A.D. 1467). Although these angels are additions of a later age, this work for beauty of design and consummate workmanship, yields to no other in Siena.

Another work of his, also a reliquary, of simpler design, yet not inferior in execution, is preserved in the Opera del Duomo.

A very beautiful collection of sacramental plate is to be seen in the Chigi Chapel of the Duomo, candlesticks, also, and a very fine crucifix, the last-named being work of the seventeenth century.

Goro di Ser Neroccio (1487) is one of the Sienese artists who worked much in the precious metals. A reliquary and (I think) a chalice by him will be found in

the Ospedale della Scala.¹ There many miscellaneous artistic treasures may yet be seen, and amongst these are four other reliquaries of the fifteenth century.

Another prominent name amongst goldsmiths of the fifteenth century is that of Gabriello d'Antonio di Lorenzo, to whom is assigned the famous reliquary known as the "Albero di Lucignano," which, as its name imports, is a "tree" springing out of a Gothic reliquary below. Upon each end of the six branches of the tree are affixed medallion-reliquaries. A crucifix forms the summit, which again is surmounted by a pelican. This work is of bronze-gilt, adorned with silver, corals, and enamels.

Another art—one of the minor arts—in which Siena showed herself quite equal to any other city, was that of rich brocades and embroidered stuffs for the service of the Church. Vestments, *e.g.*, chasubles, stoles, copes, etc., heavy with embroideries of gold and silver, and lavishly decorated with many

¹ Most of the articles, of whatever nature, in the Ospedale della Scala are marked with the emblem of the institution, *i.e.*, a small "Ladder."

coloured designs, are preserved in most of the sacred institutions and churches of the city; notably in the Opera del Duomo, the Ospedale della Scala, the Seminario Arcivescovile, the Cappella del Voto, and other chapels of the cathedral. Most of the small chapels of the Contrade can also boast of some fine specimens, and there are some private collections of these sumptuous productions in the city. Some of them go as far back as the fifteenth century. In general, however, they may be said to be of the two following centuries.

As if to prove to Italy that Siena was equal to the production of all things that can serve for the needs of every-day life, as well as of those that minister to a luxurious taste, the city was great in ceramic art also. She was fortunate in possessing a peculiarly good clay, which she not only worked for her own needs, but exported for the use of foreign fabrics of pottery. Some of the Sienese ware is not inferior, if similar, to that of Gubbio and Faenza. The vases and phials, especially manufactured

for the service of the chemists and hospitals, are often very fine in colour and design. The Ospedale della Scala, naturally, has a fine collection of such productions of Sienese pottery. These in some instances may be assigned to the sixteenth century. Few of the names of the artists employed have been preserved. But we hear of a Simone da Siena and a Dei Turchi as exceptionally good amongst them.

The enumeration of all the arts that¹ formerly flourished in Siena in the glorious course of so many centuries (the reader will agree with the writer), in many ways forms a melancholy retrospect. For, although her masons and her wood-carvers still seek to emulate the efforts of their predecessors, Sienese art exists no more. A poet once wrote, "Art is long and Time is fleeting." For Siena, and for how many other Italian cities, the verse might run "Time is long, and Art is fleeting!"

¹ Detailed notice of the famous *Tavolette della Biccherna* and *della Gaberna*, an art distinctly Sienese, has not been here attempted, they having been so exhaustively treated of in Mr W. Heywood's well-known "*Pictorial Chronicle of Siena*."

PART II

SIENESE PAINTING

CHAPTER I

THE SIENESE PAINTERS

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

It has become a trite remark that each and every art, in whatever land, originated in the religious sentiment. The first rude graven image expressed the belief of the humble craftsman in an invisible Power. The first misshapen bowl of metal or terracotta was moulded for the service of his gods. In the rudiments of architecture, in the first daubs of colour upon a stone, or upon a wall, the religious idea was the motive power. Even dancing, choral dancing, was a form of religious worship.

Throughout the slow development of Art from the earliest ages to the latest, no matter who or what the deity, the idea has been the same—the dedication of Art to Religion.

The old motto so often met with in Italian towns, "*Laborare est orare*," was interpreted by the earliest Italian artists in its fullest application, and by none so much as by those of Siena. The Sienese art of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is chiefly the expression of the belief of those painters. Their art is throughout interlaced with their creed. In one sense they all paint alike, that is, from their religious standpoint.

In every town in Italy, where there was a school of painting, the painters formed a guild; but in Siena it was more than that. It was a hierarchy, and Duccio di Buoninsegna was their first high-priest. Art, for them, was not merely the power of representing through the medium of colour and form beautiful beings and beautiful ideas. They had been entrusted with a mission, and had been charged with a message to the world generally, and to Siena in particular. Siena was not only the fairest city in the world, singled out and distinguished both by nature and art, but in

especial favour with Heaven, and placed under the immediate protection of the Virgin Mary. It was she who in times of pestilence and strife hastened to the assistance of her faithful people, and took beneath her sheltering wings a race peculiarly acceptable to her, until the Almighty had hearkened to her prayers. Thus it was that the great plague of 1348 had stayed its ravages, and that victory upon the great day of Montaperto (1260) had declared itself for the Sienese.

And if the Virgin had not revealed herself in person to the Sienese, she had sent to them Saint Catherine, Saint Bernardo da Tolomei, Saint Bernardino, and other holy men, to assure the people of Siena that they were never absent from her thoughts. It is recorded of one of the greatest artists of the Florentine School, that before he commenced a picture, he was wont to kneel down and invoke the Almighty that He would render it worthy of His acceptance. It was in a similar spirit that the Sienese painted their pictures. The subjects of all their works must be drawn from Holy

Writ, or from the legends and traditions of holy men and women. This exalted view of art, this persistently unworldly frame of mind, were the characteristics throughout of the School of Siena, and render that School unique in the history of art, from Duccio di Buoninsegna down to Neroccio di Landi.

Such being the unswerving ideals of Sienese art, it does not surprise us to find that there is a studied absence of classical subjects in the galleries and palaces of the city. It naturally followed, too, that Siena found herself in uncompromising opposition to the new methods introduced by the Renaissance. They were abhorrent to her. She never ceased to protest with all the force that painting was capable of, against what she considered to be the deification of human attributes; against the revival of a Greek anthropomorphism. To artists such as Sano di Pietro, Benvenuto di Giovanni, and especially to Neroccio di Landi, such ideas were as false as they were repugnant. And thus, although the

last two painters were working quite at the end of the fifteenth century, we find in their pictures what seems to us a studied archaism, a tendency at times to return to the style of Duccio and of the Lorenzetti.

If any of the artists above-mentioned went to Florence to see what the Florentines were doing in the way of art, they could not have expressed their disapproval of the methods of the Lippi, Botticelli, and of some of their forerunners, with greater force than by their religious adherence to their own conservative principles of work. When we approach for the first time the so-called "Majestas" of Duccio (let us put aside for the moment the contemplation of the large Madonna, which gives the name to the great series of panels), we seem to be not unfamiliar with the striking series of Scriptural scenes thereon depicted with such force, and yet with such simplicity. That sense of familiarity is intensified when we go to the gallery of the "Belle Arti," and find ourselves surrounded with the masterpieces of the two Lorenzetti, Taddeo di Bartolo, Vecchietta,

Sano di Pietro, Neroccio, and other Sienese masters, of whom we probably have never before heard. We seem to be in the presence of magnified missals and of designs for painted windows, and that as much in the beautiful sense of colour displayed as in the curious "flatness" of the designs. Many of them appear to us just what we have seen in missals, "*libri coralii*" and "*antifonii*," or in the "*Tavolette della Bicherna*" in the Piccolomini Palace.

Hence we are led to believe that the earliest art of Siena (the dawn of the art of painting everywhere, indeed) is not to be found in the huge frozen Madonnas of Guido da Siena, Cimabue, and Duccio, but in the old and long precedent works of priest-artists, *i.e.*, in the missals. A lavish use of gilt in the backgrounds of these pictures generally increases the resemblance to the missals, and the consequent probability that the earlier artists availed themselves of them, and even went to them for inspiration in their larger works. Whether Duccio worked as a missal painter is not

known for certain. It may be inferred that he did so, inasmuch as there is much miniature painting of the kind in Siena and elsewhere, which is the genuine work of some of the foremost and earlier artists of the school.

It was this training in the school of missal-painting that caused Duccio's preference for small panels, notably in his masterpiece of the "Majestas" series. Once only did he (in the central figure there), show any predilection for the representation of a life-size subject, and then only because the fashion had been set by the semi-Byzantines, Cimabue and Guido da Siena. Yet whatever may have been Duccio's proclivities or limitations, there can be but little doubt that he was the greatest master of colour who had yet appeared. His successors endeavoured to follow him as much in that respect, as in his types and methods. It is indeed to their remarkable talents as colourists that the early school of Siena is largely indebted for its fame. Colouring such as theirs had not yet been

seen, and it was preserved throughout the existence of the school. We have too little of the work of Cimabue to pronounce what he was as a colourist, and Giotto has suffered so much from restoration and retouching that we can scarcely say what his colouring may have been.

The Sienese painters have generally a desire to present as much of all their figures as possible, whether they be in the background or otherwise. They possess an almost pathetic disinclination to give you profiles, which in itself marks a great dissimilarity to the manner of Giotto and his followers. A typical instance of this tendency may be given in Duccio's "Three Maries at the Tomb," in which the angel sits upon the sepulchre. It is evident that the women are full of reverence, and awe, and wonder, but rather than present less of their full figures and faces to the spectator, they have to content themselves with merely glancing out of the corners of their eyes at the heavenly messenger, so as to maintain the desired pose.

In a much later artist, Sano di Pietro, there is quite an amusing instance of this desire that no one in the picture should be represented in profile, although standing in the background. So he gives you one eye only, only the top of the head and none of the figure at all being visible. This picture, from a church in Massa Maritima, was exhibited in the Mostra in Siena in 1904. Sassetta forms an exception to this habit, but he was one of the few Sienese artists influenced by the Florentine School. Simone Martini, too, in his great "Majestas," presents several of his angels in profile; and also Ambrogio Lorenzetti, in his large landscape - frescoes, gives many of the citizens there represented wholly in side-face. But the habit referred to is found almost without exception in the altar-pieces and similar pictures of the early school.

Backgrounds, too, are almost always gilt. It was not until the Umbrian School made its influence felt that artists like Del Pacchia, Pacchiarotto, Fungai, and others of the later school introduced Tuscan landscapes into their

religious pictures. The earlier Sienese were doubtless anxious that the attention of the spectator should be riveted completely upon the holy persons represented in their pictures. Except when Siena was to be actually represented as the scene of some sacred event, *e.g.*, as being taken under the protection of the Madonna, local colouring as such was not at all congenial to the Sienese spirit. It is, I think, worthy of attention as another characteristic of the school, that the artists do not seem to have had recourse to models for the types of their saints.

Portrait painting at no time seems to have been in favour with them. The earlier masters had had the unique and inestimable privilege of living face to face with some of the greatest saints known to history. Many of them had seen Caterina Benincasa toiling up the hill leading to the Ospedale della Scala, to fulfil her self-imposed daily duties of nursing the sick and the afflicted. They had heard the inspired voice of the saintly Bernardino resounding through the cathedral, or urging conscience-stricken crowds in the

vast Piazza del Campo to betake themselves to repentance and a new life. The likenesses of both saints have been handed down to their posterity; that of St Bernardino has been scores of times repeated by Sano di Pietro and by others. Yet Sienese painters have rarely, or never, given those features or countenances to other saints. They looked even further and deeper for their types. To bring out and to interpret the noblest attributes of the soul and of the character, and to stamp them on the countenance and in the form; that was their conception of art. Truth for them peculiarly was beauty; the spiritual was to be spiritually discerned. And yet their saints, their holy men and holy women, are human; but they all possess that touch of the divine so often lacking in the later schools.

It would be erroneous to suppose that, because the Sienese did not make gods of merely physical beauty, their pictures do not contain faces and forms of exquisite charm. They never glorified mere ugliness as such, like many of the early Flemings and Germans, and

they were generally averse to the introduction of portraits of contemporaries into their sacred pictures. No spectator could point out that that was the "very image of our Gemma," or pronounce that the other "was Giuseppe all over." To draw a beautiful woman, and to christen her a Madonna, was quite opposed to the Sienese conception of the Mother of the Lord. To take an Apollo, and to turn him into a St Sebastian transfixed with arrows, would have been repugnant to the high ideals of Sienese religious art. These were the methods of the Renaissance, which the Sienese painters opposed with all their souls. Thus we find in all their works from first to last, a serene, sustained, lofty standard of what art should be, a steadfast adherence to the unwritten traditions that had been handed down to them from their forefathers.

Very rarely, I think, do we find a desire to strike out in a new direction. There is generally an aversion to experiments in form or colour, an absence of striving after originality and new effects. But it must not be assumed, because the Sienese painters main-

tained a rigid conservatism in their art-principles, and an unyielding hostility to those of the Renaissance, that they had not emancipated themselves from Byzantinism. Slow and cautious as they determined their progress should be, there *was* development, and growth too; but always upon their own lines, and without ever losing sight of those first principles both of theory and practice, which they never abandoned.

That Duccio's greatest pupil, Simone Martini, surpassed his master, will probably be denied by few who have seen his great but fast-fading fresco of the "Virgin in Glory," in the Sala del Mappamondo in the Palazzo Pubblico, or his beautiful "Annunciation" in the gallery of the Uffizi. It will be conceded also that the Lorenzetti (Ambrogio especially) enlarged the province of Art, and infinitely extended her horizon. Nor can it be urged that, upon the disappearance of those distinguished brothers, Siena had any reason to be ashamed of their successors. Only to mention the names of T. di Bartolo, Sano di Pietro, Vecchietta, Neroccio di Landi (all

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men of the highest originality) suffices to prove that in Siena the sacred flame burned with undimmed lustre, even after the dawn of the sixteenth century.

Of Ambrogio Lorenzetti, it may be remarked here, that he not only introduced certain varieties in the type of the Madonna and the Infant—a type which was never wholly abandoned by the Sienese masters, even as late as the end of the fifteenth century—but that he was probably the originator of certain allegorical paintings peculiar to the early Middle Ages. Early in the fourteenth century, he had been commissioned by the Sienese Republic to bring home to the minds of the rather turbulent citizens, through the instrumentality of his art, the advantages of good government, and the terrors of bad government. This kind of pictured sermons (as they might be termed) at a time when few could read, seems to have appealed with great force to the minds of the lower classes. We hear of Rienzi stirring up the multitude at Rome with devices of the same kind.

The Campo Santo at Pisa is a museum¹ of such didactic art. Likely enough Ambrogio Lorenzetti may have exercised his brush there too; at any rate his masterly frescoes of bad and good government upon the walls of the Sala della Pace in the Palazzo Pubblico are very probably the first instance of the "allegorical," while his fine characterisation of the cardinal virtues in these frescoes is quite unique. They are all very beautiful women, and yet, in illustration of what has been advanced above, it may be observed that they are not of a Sienese type. Indeed, they are somewhat of a Venetian character, and, curiously enough, seem to foreshadow the type of beauty prevalent in the pictures of the great Venetian artists a hundred and fifty years later on—very many years after the death of A. Lorenzetti.

Possibly there has been an error in the calculations made as to Ambrogio's birth and death. For, Vasari, at least, makes him alive at over eighty. One is loth to

¹ The modern Italian connoisseurs are inclined, I think, to attribute many of those paintings, *e.g.*, the "Trionfo della Morte," to Spinello Aretino or his followers.

believe that he died at the early age of twenty-five, and the amount of work that he contrived to achieve does not warrant the assumption. The fame of his immediate successors, if not equal to his own, sheds additional lustre upon the school, in the persons of Bartolo di Fredi and Taddeo di Bartolo. The frescoes by the latter artist in the chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico are among the finest works of the kind executed in the early fifteenth century. Taddeo di Bartolo lived well into the fifteenth century; sufficiently long to have seen that the Sienese School was in no danger of dying out. Four, at least, of the foremost artists of the school were working at the time of his death. These were Stefano di Giovanni (Sassetta), Giovanni di Paolo (one of the most capable and versatile spirits of the period), Sano di Pietro (in his own line never excelled), and, above all, the greatest sculptor who had yet appeared in Italy, Jacopo della Quercia.

The fifteenth century was a very brilliant period in the history of Sienese art, rendered

famous both by the number of artists and by the very high standard of excellence maintained. The names of Vecchietta, Neroccio, Matteo di Giovanni, Benvenuto di Giovanni, and Francesco di Giorgio, especially stand out prominently in the front rank of the workers of their day. And some of them owe their fame to their genius as sculptors as well as painters. Francesco di Giorgio seems almost to have rivalled Leonardo da Vinci in versatility, for he was distinguished as painter, architect, sculptor, and military engineer. He needed only to have been a goldsmith like several of his Florentine brethren, to have exhausted the gamut of art. And Vecchietta and Neroccio have both executed works of sculpture not inferior to those of Donatello himself.

It is a singular fact in the history of Italian painting that, outside Siena itself, it seems to have been reserved for a very late posterity to appreciate the greatness of her art. There seems to have been a strange indifference to her claims to artistic excellence throughout.

Charles V., who was more than once in Siena, was, as all of us know, one of the foremost admirers of Italian art, and yet when he was collecting the pictures which served as the foundation of that superb gallery known as the Prado of Madrid, we do not hear of his having been desirous of possessing any of the Sienese School.

Even a member of a great Sienese family, Cardinal Todeschini himself, afterwards Pope Pius III., so little appreciated the artistic merits of his fellow-citizens, that he decided to summon a foreigner, Pinturicchio, to Siena, to decorate the wall of the Piccolomini Library. And thus again it is Bazzi (Sodoma), a foreigner—not a Sano di Pietro or a Neroccio—who was called upon to immortalise the divine ecstasies of the great Sienese saint, the canonised Catherine.

And in much later times, when Napoleon's generals were ransacking Italian galleries, we do not find that Siena was laid under contribution for the adornment of public and private collections in Paris.

We may indeed be grateful for this last

instance of want of appreciation of the Sienese School. But in an investigation of pictures alone, we should form but a limited idea of the comprehensiveness of Sienese art. We have to realise that in all the varied branches of art, Siena excelled, and that she touched no one of those branches which she did not adorn. Her architects, and sculptors, and goldsmiths, her workers in metal, and in wood, and in terra-cotta were as excellent as her painters.

Indeed her statuary in terra - cotta and wood, as well as in marble and bronze, is in nothing inferior to the best work of the Florentines. As regards the two former materials, her sculptors form a distinctive class of their own. That consummate artist, Jacopo della Quercia, executed some of his finest and most characteristic statues in terra-cotta and wood. Neroccio di Landi, also, whilst, as a painter, continuing to produce pictures conceived and executed in the archaic Sienese style, has endowed his native city with some masterpieces of sculpture of a much more "advanced"

character. That he should have worked in styles so dissimilar in these two branches of art, while it shows his greatness and versatility, forms an enigma not easy to solve.

Amongst other distinctive features of Sienese art may be specified the famous Graffiti of the pavement in the Duomo, and the illuminated book-covers of the "*Tavolette della Bicherna e Gabella*." Both of these unique series of illustrations may be regarded as peculiar glories of Siena. It has often been asked, and by those especially whose eyes have recently been awakened to the extraordinary merits of the Sienese School, what have been the causes of the tardy appreciation of what was certainly an unique manifestation of art in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

For it is only within comparatively recent years that the early school of Siena has been appraised at its due value. Many causes, as the writer believes, have been at work. Foremost, probably, has been the predominating influence exercised over the whole world of art by Florence, from the dawn of art to

its culmination. The close proximity of Florence to Siena, and her position as the art-centre of the world, seem to have been injurious to the latter city. Men's eyes were drawn away from her, and fixed upon her rival, and as in the process of time the art of painting grew and developed, and Siena refused to be drawn into that development which is called the Renaissance, she became, as it were, stranded upon her hill-tops.

Another cause, and one perhaps of even wider significance, has been the position taken up by many art-critics as to the rise of art—one not wholly abandoned even now. A gross darkness, they think, as of Chaos and Old Night, fell like a pall upon the whole universe immediately after the destruction of the Western Empire. Art went out like an extinguished lamp, and no spark was again visible to European eyes, until the appearance of Cimabue, Guido da Siena, and the rest of the semi-Byzantine brotherhood. Has the theory not been something akin to that? one cut and dried, like the old Mosaic Cosmogony, or the Theory of "Catastrophes"?

That rather confined view of art, or rather of its origin, chiefly arose from the absolute restriction of the conception of art to the one branch of painting, and from the restriction of that branch again to a picture on wood, or upon some material that could be hung upon a wall, or taken down, or carried about. As though, all through the early Christian centuries, the deft fingers of unnamed priestly artists had not been producing in thousands of missals, works often exquisite both in conception and in execution! As though upon the earliest vaults of Christian architecture at Rome and Ravenna designers and decorators, far more capable than Cimabue and Guido da Siena, had not been at work hundreds of years in advance of those painters!

And so we shall not have an adequate idea of the re-birth of painting, until we recognise that that art was but a handmaid to her earlier and nobler sisters, architecture and sculpture, and that all were in a manner interchangeable.

Another penalty that the art of Siena has

been made to suffer, has been the almost stony silence maintained by the older writers concerning her. With very few exceptions, her artists are not mentioned in art dictionaries.¹ Almost a conspiracy of silence it seems. Roman lips have scarcely been more tightly sealed about Etruscan art. Siena, in punishment for her contumacy towards the Renaissance, seems to have been placed in Coventry, and "severely let alone" for centuries upon her disdainful Acropolis. It is to be conceived, had it been suggested as a reproach to the Sienese masters of the Trecento and the Quattrocento, that they always continued to preserve and to reproduce in their religious subjects the types dear to Duccio and to Martini, that they would have warmly repelled the charge. And they would have been right. For there *was* development, and there *was*

¹ An exception (and a noteworthy one, considering the quarter whence it comes) must be made to the above remark. Vasari, who is notoriously indifferent to the merits of non-Florentine artists, has a great deal of praise for Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Duccio. And it may also be added that he permits Ambrogio Lorenzetti to attain to the years of an octogenarian, a fact which is in pleasing disagreement with some other writers.

progress within their own lines and ideals. And yet it was also true (a truth which they would have eagerly admitted), that their eyes were turned rather towards Byzantium than towards Florence.

The Sienese art-hierarchy had declared that Religion, as they interpreted her, was to lay down the laws within which Art was to work. The Renaissance declared that Religion was but one of the branches of human ideals, and that Byzantinism had been only a phase, and was now a fossil. That the Sienese conception of art was narrowed and obscured by an ever-present consciousness of her "mission" cannot be doubted. Siena failed to comprehend that Art is capable of—indeed demands—an infinite and ceaseless expansion, that no restriction upon her progress is possible, and that her combinations are as inexhaustible and as infinite as those of the notes embraced within the octave. Siena was relegated to the fastnesses of her own beautiful city. Florence did not *claim* any mission, but within her convictions lay the certainty that

a Raphael would one day develop out of an Oreagna. But with Siena there could be no bridging over the gulf that lay between Neroccio and Sodoma. How far the fundamental divergencies in their conception of art may have been accentuated and even embittered by their political rivalries, need not here be discussed at length. But that their animosity forbade any mutual co-operation in the field of art seems to be quite untrue, as will be noted in a later page.

Thus it inevitably came about that the sceptre which Siena had nobly wielded passed into the more capable and plastic hands of Florence. But if the art of Siena was displaced by the Renaissance, Siena was not conscious of any struggle for pre-eminence. She neither abated nor abandoned her high ideals. "In maiden meditation, fancy free," she pursued her own path in dignified seclusion upon her hills.

If she came to be defeated she was neither humiliated nor disgraced. And she can point to one great triumph of which no other school of art can boast. She did not "go out,"

because of the exhaustion or abandonment of her ideals. It did not come to her to have to conceal the drying up of inspiration beneath the insincerities of exaggerated sentiment. If she had to be displaced, she at least yielded to the Umbrians—a not unworthy nor insincere school of art. She did not have to descend to the merely manual dexterities of the Mannerists, still less to the anthropomorphism of the Eclectics. She never perished of inanity. She never perished at all. Time, which submerged her, or rather, seemed to have submerged her, has replaced her upon her throne. She preserved to the last the whiteness of her soul. The Madonna of Neroccio painted in 1476 may be regarded as the latest and noblest protest of Siena against the Renaissance. And it also remains as one of the greatest of our heritages from the past.¹

¹ This typical production of the Sienese fifteenth century is in the Galleria delle Belle Arti. No gallery in Europe is so representative of its native school. All Siena's masters from Duccio and Guido da Siena, to Rutilio Manetti, *i.e.*, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, may be studied upon these walls.

CHAPTER II

DUCCIO—SIMONE MARTINI—SEGNA DI BONA-
VENTURA — LIPPO MEMMI — PIETRO AND
AMBROGIO LORENZETTI

DUCCIO DI BUONINSEGNA (1278-1319) is the founder of the Sienese School, and is fairly entitled to be regarded as the father of modern painting. He was contemporary with Cimabue, although several years younger than that *magni nominis umbra*, whose birth is generally assigned to the year 1240. He was older than Giotto — some authorities say by fourteen years, others give less. His chief works, the genuineness of which has never been assailed, still remain in his native city. Nor is the authenticity of his pupils and his followers at all doubtful. We are not aware who may have been his own master, so we are

at liberty to select as such any one of the obscure artists who are known to have been painting in Siena before the year 1278, when it is supposed that Duccio commenced active work. Of such earlier painters, the name of Guido da Siena more than suggests itself. For Guido da Siena is responsible for two, at least, of those¹ semi-Byzantine Madonnas, a replica of which first made Duccio famous.

Another pre-Duccio painter is Coppo di Marcovaldo, of whose talents there is but one solitary example, also a Madonna, which is to be seen in the Church of the Servi di Maria. Other early artists, whose only claim to fame lies in the fact that their names are remembered, such as Gilio di Pietro² or Massarello di Gilio, are too shadowy to be more than cited, and cannot affect Duccio's predominance in Siena. A recent author has lately revived a tradition, or has given his support to a theory, that it was Duccio

¹ The name of Margaritone, the earliest, I think, in the history of Italian Art, also suggests itself. He flourished in the beginning of the thirteenth century.

² Gilio di Pietro painted a *Tavoletta della Bicherna*, dated 1258. It is the earliest of that series.

and not Cimabue who painted the famous Madonna, now in the Church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Vasari has been so very circumstantial in his account of the production and exposition of that epoch-making picture, that it is not easy to give in to this new reading of the Cimabue legend. Whether this novel suggestion be due to the increasing depreciation of Vasari as an authority upon Art, or to the desire to exalt Duccio above Cimabue cannot be decided. But the attempt to do the latter is at least interesting, since the attribution, on reasonable grounds, of any further work to a great but not too versatile artist, such as Duccio was, must be worthy of consideration. However this may be, his works in Siena now demand our attention. The type of the Duccio semi-Byzantine Madonna is familiar to us all, whether it be a Duccio or a Cimabue, or a Guido da Siena—for each of them could have painted the others. We have seen the type in mosaic upon the apses of early Christian churches at Rome. Immobile it is, hard and stereotyped as

the "Æginetan fixed grin" of the archaic Athenian priestesses in marble or in clay, or the Dædalian statuettes of Artemis and Aphrodite. The elongated head, bent downwards to the Babe, the long-cut eyes, the attenuated fingers, the long mantle which descends from the shrouded head to the feet, and entirely conceals the form which is scarcely hinted at, the circle of adoring angels, with a certain attempt to individualise them, complete the picture. In his angels Duccio has been far more successful than the two other artists, and he has also introduced kneeling saints and other fine details.

But there came a moment in Duccio's life—for he *was* a progressive artist—when it seems that he was not satisfied with the mere reproduction of the type which he had learned from his Byzantine masters. And thus (it probably was in his later years) we find him boldly transferring the Infant from the "left side of the Virgin"—hitherto *de rigueur*—to her right side. In such a departure from Byzantine convention, Duccio gave proof

of his originality, and such a wrench away from conventionalism may have been a turning-point in Sienese art. It will be found that Duccio's foremost pupils, Simone Martini and Ambrogio Lorenzetti, followed their master in diverging from the hitherto sacred position. A more striking proof, even, of Duccio's progress may be cited. It is an altar-piece (No. 28, "Belle Arti"). Christ is here represented in the Virgin's arms with four Saints. Above, the Saviour again appears in the act of blessing, and attended by angels. Both in conception and execution, the artist has "come on" most remarkably. There are two or three other small pictures of his in the same room, which, being full of purely Byzantine works, shows how greatly the artist has out-distanced them, and himself too, since the days of his huge Madonna.

It is here assumed that the "Majestas" referred to was painted earlier than the beautiful series of panels of which it forms the centre. And if it be correct, as has been stated, that the latter were completed in the year 1311, when Duccio was becoming an

oldish man,¹ it is not probable that the artist would have returned to his "first manner" which, as we have seen, he had modified in the two instances referred to above. These great works formerly stood upon the high altar in the Duomo, for which Duccio painted them. They are now placed in the Opera del Duomo, where they can be more easily studied and admired. One set of panels represents "The Passion of our Saviour," the other the "Life and Death of the Virgin." The total number of panels is forty-four.

If the frozen Cimabue Madonna, lifeless and inanimate as it is, was considered by the Florentines to be so great a work, arousing and exciting their admiration so much that they had to break forth into shouting and dancing, what would they not have done had they beheld these delicate works, so full of colour, and life, and action? For this beautiful series of paintings forms absolutely the earliest known consecutive representation of our Lord's Sufferings on panel, as well as of the Virgin's

¹ Duccio's death is dated as late as 1332, or even 1339, by some authorities, *e.g.*, those of the London National Gallery.

life and death. Thus it has been a privilege, and also an education for all subsequent generations, to learn in what manner the first serious painter conceived such scenes, and how far his handicraft enabled him to present them. The verdict has been, I think, that the thought is throughout noble, and the execution hitherto unequalled.

Nor did Giotto himself afterwards surpass the movement, the variety, the minute representation in every detail of our Lord's Sufferings by the older artist. All these panels are so beautiful, and each subject is so conscientiously and devoutly thought out, that they will be studied and admired and thought of in their entirety rather than in detail: as a beautiful chain, wherein the excellence of each link is taken for granted. Yet there are certain scenes in Scripture history that lend themselves more peculiarly to pictorial treatment, and so, perhaps, the student may find himself more personally drawn to the panels representing "Gethsemane," "The Visit of the Three Maries to the Sepulchre," and the "*Noli*

me Tangere." The quaint representation of landscape in each of these (probably the earliest of such attempts in art) is not the least attractive feature therein.

Some years before Duccio had commenced his artistic career, the greatest work of the earliest Italian sculptor, Niccolò Pisano, had been placed in the Duomo of Siena, where it still continues to evoke the fervent admiration of the present generation. That pulpit, the finest and completest effort of early Italian sculpture, could not have been without influence upon so plastic and receptive a mind as Duccio's. I think its influence may easily be traced in many of the panels of both series. In the sculpturesque treatment especially of "The Visit of the Three Maries to the Sepulchre" in their statuesque pose, and in the sculptured folds of their drapery, for instance, Duccio has shown that his studies of the work of the great Pisan had not been in vain. The "Limbo" strikingly recalls the larger representation of the same subject in the Spanish Chapel at Florence.

The central figure of the "Madonna and

Infant" has been already referred to. That it does not differ from other Madonnas of the period will probably be conceded; and yet the attendant hosts of angels, the saints and apostles, and the kneeling figures of the patron saints of Siena, are very far in advance of a similar kind attributed to Cimabue and Guido da Siena. It does not come within the scope of this brief notice of Duccio di Buoninsegna to draw comparisons between him and his great contemporary, Giotto. Duccio, it may be briefly remarked, was more fortunate in one respect than the great founder of Florentine painting. For the pupils and immediate successors of the former, although faithful to his lessons, and never unmindful of their indebtedness to him, at once widened the path and developed the frontiers of art.¹ The Gaddis and Daddis and Giotto's, upon the contrary, were content to remain, for some fifty years subsequent to Giotto's death, merely reproducers and reflectors of their

¹ To the above remark, one great reservation, in the instance of Orcagna, one of the very greatest of artists, should be made.

great founder's style—albeit Taddeo Gaddi was a very capable one.

Simone Martini (1285-1344).—As has been already seen, progress in Sienese painting had begun even in Duccio's own lifetime, and notably in the instance of Simone Martini, his foremost pupil. His greatest work in Siena, his "Majestas" in the Sala del Mappamondo, had been finished, long before Duccio's death, in the year 1315. We can imagine, therefore, that the older master may have made many suggestions during its execution, would have followed its progress with pride, and would have been greatly interested in comparing this great fresco with his own "Majestas." The development of the earlier type has here been sudden and radical.

The hieratic idol has become a living woman, has developed into the Queen of Heaven. She wears a jewelled crown upon her head, and her embroidered robe is fastened with gems. Her head and that of the Infant are surrounded by decorated haloes. A Gothic throne has been substituted



Photo]

[Lombardi

THE MADONNA.
From Simone Martini's "Majestas."

To face p. 122.

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for the customary Byzantine chair. Thus it will be seen that the Gothic style was already beginning to obtain in Italy. A great company of Saints and Apostles are gathered together upon either side of the throne, and several of them are holding the poles which support the baldacchino that is suspended over it. Angels below the throne are holding up offerings, and behind them the kneeling figures are those of the patron Saints: Ansanus, Victor, Crescentius of Siena, and Savinus of Orvieto. The increased animation and variety, the vigour and beauty of the forms and countenances are at once apparent. The fresco is but a ruin now, but enough remains to convince us that it must once have been a vision of heavenly beauty.

That it has been so fleeting a vision is to be attributed to the carelessness of those citizens who assigned the site to the great artist. A salt magazine was located in the story beneath the Sala del Mappamondo, and so caused damp to spread over the walls occupied by this great creation. It is even said that Simone had to go over his work

again within ten years of its completion. Although the salt magazine, of course, no longer exists, we may imagine what the picture must have suffered from restorers during the last six hundred years or so.

Upon the wall opposite is to be seen the only other authenticated work by the same master in Siena. It is the equestrian portrait of Guidoriccio da Fogliano, Captain of War in Siena. You may admire the horseman, as probably the earliest large portrait by a Sienese artist (the school did not encourage portrait-painting at any time), and the landscape is interesting, for it is that of Siena, and so Simone painted what he had observed and seen. But the horse he never saw, nor did any one else see it, for it is a dummy of dummies, and never could have existed. So to see Simone in Siena we must content ourselves with what remains of his splendid "Majestas"; for there is nought else in Siena that can be attributed to his brush. His greatest triumphs are to be found at Assisi, and even at Orvieto. And his beautiful "Annunciation" at Florence

every visitor to the "Uffizi" knows and admires.

As regards his work at Orvieto: some of his pictures from there were to be seen in the Mostra of 1904 at Siena. Notable amongst these from the Orvieto Duomo was a polyptych—the "Madonna with Saints Paul, Peter, Dominic and the Magdalene," half-length figures. It is in excellent preservation, and is dated and signed "Simone da Siena MCCCXX." Another Simone Martini in the same exhibition—a very delicately and highly finished Madonna—is the property of Count Stroganoff, Rome. It is a very small picture, and may have been the cover of a *Tavoletta della Bicherna*, for, as it is well known, Simone was also a miniature-painter.

The remarkable and very early copy of the Florence "Annunciation" of Simone, from the Church of San Pietro Ovale, one would be almost inclined to attribute to the master himself. It bears the name of Simone Martini, but is known to be a copy. The pictures attributed to Simone are variously signed. It would seem that he preferred

the signature "Simone da Siena" or "Senese." There is one undoubted work of his bearing that signature in the Royal collection at Windsor or in London. The frescoes attributed to him in the old Papal Palace at Avignon are very fragmentary now, and no genuine signature there can now be traced. It is not very long since he used to be called Simone Memmi. There was apparently some confusion between him and his coadjutor and imitator Lippo Memmi. There is some idea, too, that the two were related in blood. It seems very probable that they worked together at Avignon.

Segna di Bonaventura.¹—Of Duccio's other pupils, Segna di Bonaventura—often abbreviated into "Tura"—is the best known. He reproduces his master's types and style very faithfully, but is not without merits of his own, and he greatly improved upon his master's draperies; *c.f.* a very well-preserved "Virgin and Infant" in one of the rooms of the oratory of the Seminary of St Francis.

¹ His full name is Segna di Bonaventura di Buoninsegna. The date of his death is unknown.

In the "Belle Arti," 40, 42, 43, are three notable pictures by this artist. No. 40 is a "Madonna with Saints Paul and Bernard." The inscription "Signa me fecit" appears on the sword of Saint Paul. No. 42 is a "Saint Ansanus." (Saint Ansanus Martyr is said to have converted Siena in the fourth century, and is the most revered saint in Sienese history.) No. 43 represents Saint Galganus, also a greatly venerated Sienese saint. His abbey, in the vicinity of Siena, is one of the earliest Gothic edifices in Italy, and was commenced early in the thirteenth century. Hence the style was introduced into Siena.

Lippo Memmi.—Lippo Memmi (died 1357) has not produced much in Siena, but his very sweet and tender Madonna (the "Madonna del Popolo"), from the Church of the Servi, must be singled out as one of the choicest examples in this Madonna-haunted city. No. 51 in the "Belle Arti" is a fine altar-piece to which one hurriedly turns as a beautiful example of Lippo Memmi's genius. But your guide tells you that you are mistaken, and that it is the

work of another. Perhaps it may be a copy of a lost work of Memmi; anyhow, it is a beautiful work.

There are other copies of Memmi in the gallery. Formerly in the Arch of the Antiporto, outside the Porta¹ Camollia, a great fresco of the Assumption was to be seen, by no less famous artists than Martini and Memmi. It has long since perished. Over an altar in the Church of Santa Lucia is preserved a single head of a Madonna, which you are told is a fragment of the original drawing either by Simone or Memmi. It is not worth looking at. You must go to San Gimignano to have an adequate idea of what Memmi could do. There is a very fine fresco of a "Majestas" there, but it is evident that Memmi followed Martini too faithfully in his choice of this oft-repeated subject. Memmi has much fine work in Orvieto.

Pietro Lorenzetti (1305-1348). *Ambrogio Lorenzetti* (1323——?).—It is chiefly with

¹ In the Choir of Sant' Agostino hangs a picture representing Beato Agostino Novello and his Miracles, variously attributed to Simone and Lippo. It is far too high up to be curiously scanned.

these brothers that we must connect the golden age of Sienese Art. Extremely prolific they both were. Siena is full of their work. Probably they were both pupils of Simone Martini; certainly they learned much of him, and were at least reverential students of the art of Duccio. Both of them had much to do before they developed out of Duccio's type of Madonna and Infant. Pietro himself, perhaps from having been born in Duccio's lifetime, never did get quite away from that type. It has been said by some writers that Pietro died of the plague in the year 1348, when Siena was devastated by a terrible epidemic; but that Ambrogio lived well into his eightieth year, may be accepted on Vasari's authority. That author, too, has seldom been so complimentary to a non-Florentine artist as he has been to Ambrogio. But it needs not the eulogium of Vasari to pronounce that Ambrogio was by far the greatest of the two brothers.

A glance at his greatest works, the frescoes of "Buon Governo" and "Mal Governo" in the Sala dei Nove (or Sala della Pace), in the

Palazzo Pubblico, suffices not only to prove that, but to convince us that Sienese art has taken a bound forward.

The conception of the mission of Art, hitherto limited to one purely religious—the illustration of Scripture histories, or the kindling of popular veneration for the person of the Madonna—seems suddenly to have greatly widened. Art seems now to open a fresh chapter, to be concerning herself with the moral character of man, with his development in this mortal sphere.

She desires to bring home to men's hearts the truth that in a world of political and social stress and storm, all citizens must work out their own salvation, that anarchy cannot be averted by genuflections and adoration. That even the Madonna cannot save us from ourselves if we forget our responsibilities to those fair Presences that are ever within us and about us whether we will or no. Temperance, Peace, Concord, Fortitude, Justice, Magnanimity, and Prudence : these should be our State Deities. It was at some time in the 'thirties of the Trecento, that the City Fathers entrusted to



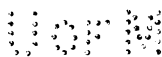
Photo]

PEACE.

[Alinari

By Ambrogio Lorenzetti.

To face p. 130.



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Ambrogio Lorenzetti the duty of bringing home to the turbulent citizens of Siena, by means of his art, these much-needed counsels. In entrusting Ambrogio Lorenzetti with the execution of these great symbolical teachings, we may suppose that they considered him to be more capable than either his brother or his master of carrying out the objects they had in view. They had come to the conclusion, it appears, that the Commonwealth would be better served by active cultivation of the social and political virtues than by a sort of pious lethargy. Men were to be urged to the attainment of a more muscular form of Christianity.

They were daily neglecting their ancient axiom, and were merging the "laborare" in the "orare," and "laborare" was not wholly to be comprised in manual labour.

It has been generally conceded, and probably not least by those who had entrusted the work to Ambrogio, that he has fulfilled it with rare ability. Not before him had such a comprehensive view of the compass of art been taken, nor had such grand and noble forms been seen in painting.

Such a conception of beautiful types of the great moral attributes, without which civil polity is impossible and the moral progress of man arrested, assuredly had not been yet bodied forth by artist's brush.

Perhaps only in the Pisan School of sculpture, or in the reliefs upon Giotto's Campanile, or in the strokes of Orcagna's chisel (and these last were probably not of an earlier date), shall we find anything to compare with these noble forms. There is a certainty of touch, a largeness and roundness of modelling in the forms and features of the Cardinal Virtues, a sculpturesque treatment of their draperies, and a statuesque repose in the composition generally, which warrant a supposition that Ambrogio sought inspiration from Pisan sources. The faces and forms of Concord, Fortitude, Justice, and of Peace especially, are noteworthy. The exquisite presentment of Peace, never since surpassed, alone proves that Ambrogio,¹ in the delineation of feminine beauty, had attained a height

In the London National Gallery there is a remarkable instance of Ambrogio's talent—"The Heads of Three Nuns."

untouched by any predecessor. These great allegories are scarcely less valuable as records of customs, modes of life, and costumes of Ambrogio's day. Invaluable, too, they are, as representations of the appearance of Siena in the fourteenth century.

No city, surely, has undergone less change in street architecture during the vicissitudes of five hundred years.

Many of her towers, and many of her battlements and fortified buildings have gone, but very much that is antique and hoary with years remains.

The lofty and dominating Campanile still overrides the cupola of the Duomo, and of course all the city as well, just as we see it upon the left of the "Buon Governo" fresco. So that, were Ambrogio to return to his Siena again, he would have no difficulty in finding his way about her streets.

The "Mal Governo" in the course of centuries has suffered more than the companion fresco. Being the least valuable of the two, it has probably been less attended to by restorers. Both pictures still remain fine

in colour, as indeed are all Ambrogio's works. It is very probable that in these frescoes of Ambrogio we have the earliest examples of the allegorical-didactic style of painting which came into vogue during the fourteenth century. We hear of Rienzi at Rome in the same century, endeavouring to stir up the Roman people towards the assertion of their rights by the exhibition of a picture of a somewhat similar nature. The grand didactic paintings in the Spanish Chapel at Florence are of the same symbolical kind, and although their authorship has not yet been accurately ascertained, may possibly be the work of Sienese masters. It has also been thought likely that a follower of Ambrogio, if not the master himself, may be responsible for some of the masterly, though repulsive, scenes upon the walls of the Campo Santo at Pisa.

There is but one other work in the Palazzo Pubblico that can be attributed to this great artist—a "Virgin and Child" upon the north wall of the magnificent Loggia. It is in a terribly dilapidated condition, but an eye that has once made acquaintance with the

noble style of Ambrogio, at once detects in it the hand of the master and the grand style of that golden epoch. It should be noted, before leaving the frescoes of the "Buon" and "Mal Governo," that Ambrogio executed them in the course of two years. (So it is said by competent authorities.) Our admiration for the artist's ability is enhanced by his power of rapid execution. In his many representations of the Madonna and Child, still to be seen in Siena and the environs, he has been surpassed by no painter of the Sienese School. He still adheres to the Duccio pose, like his brother Pietro, but he gives to his Virgin a sweetness, a humanity, peculiar to himself. He has developed into a real woman that which had so long been an image. Three examples at least may be cited.

The first is above the altar in the oratory of the Seminario di San Francesco. The aquiline nose, the long upper lip, the long-cut, heavy-lidded eyes, the attenuated fingers, even the nun-like shrouded head, all these are still here. But the sweet sorrowing face,

the rapt expression, and the vigorous playful attitude of the Infant, as He clasps to His lips His mother's breast, and yet turns His eyes round to the spectator, all these things are Ambrogio's own. Another "Madonna and Infant," from the "Monistero," in the vicinity of Siena, equals for sweetness and beauty that of the Seminario. In the possession of Signor Guiccioli, near Siena, there is another very similar work, equal in merit to those mentioned above, and as finely preserved. The vividly red blouse of the Child (a most animated infant) gives also a distinctive character to this picture.

From the Chiesa dei Servi at Rapolano, also near Siena, comes another exquisite "Madonna and Infant." Here the head of the Child (almost a Raphaelesque one for beauty) is thrown back, and He glances over His left shoulder. A distinct advance in painting it seemed to me.

The works of Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the Galleria delle Belle Arti are very numerous, and most of them beautiful. Among the finest and best preserved are the following:—

No. 65. A small "Virgin and Infant" attended by angels, with the four Doctors of the Church, and Saints Catherine and Dorothy. The last-named seems to have been a favourite saint of the artist. She appears again in No. 77, a polyptych, and both in features and figure is one of the fairest beings in Sienese art. She is worthy of any artist. She holds a bouquet in her hand—one of the earliest and most successful attempts at painting a nosegay, I think. She is, of course, offering the flowers to the Virgin and her Child, who maintain the Duccio - sanctioned pose. Below is the "Deposition," one of the earliest representations of that subject. The violent action of the Magdalene in the Predella seemed to me rather exaggerated for Ambrogio. Another remarkable Ambrogio is No. 88, an "Annunciation"—a grand picture, dignified and restrained.

Of Pietro Lorenzetti it may be said, that though he suffers from the superlative excellences of his brother, he, too, is to be regarded as one of the shining lights of

the Trecento. The spell of Duccio was upon him, rather than that of his own master, Simone Martini, in his Madonnas especially; but, like Duccio, he was a great master of colour, and he possessed a very considerable sense of beauty that is especially manifested in his full-length figures of saints, which are of great dignity and stateliness. He is remarkable, too, for having turned his attention towards other subjects than those of a religious kind, and in the "Belle Arti" are to be seen ⁴ two quaint sea-pictures of his, which are probably the earliest of the kind extant. He is largely represented in the "Belle Arti," where his great abilities in colouring may best be studied. Perhaps No. 61, an "Assumption," although it has been much damaged, is his finest work there. But the work which best attests his merits is the "Life of the Virgin," in the Opera del Duomo, although that also has been sadly knocked about. If the fine panels representing the "Finding of the Cross" (close to the above) had not been so excessively restored, they

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might be regarded as equal in merit to the "Life of the Virgin." Another work of Pietro in Siena should not be overlooked. It is a very quaint fresco of the "Massacre of the Innocents" (a favourite subject with Sienese masters) in the church of the Servi. It has lately been extricated from the whitewash that has concealed it for centuries. Assuredly it has not benefited by its long slumber, nor has it been very skilfully extricated, but it is a work of rare merit.

CHAPTER III

ANDREA VANNI—BARTOLO DI FREDI—TADDEO
DI BARTOLO—LUCA DI TOMMÈ—BARNA—
SASSETTA—SANO DI PIETRO—GIOVANNI DI
PAOLO—DOMENICO DI BARTOLO—LORENZO
VECCHIETTA—FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO

ANDREA VANNI (1332-1414).—This painter is an invaluable link between St Catherine and ourselves. He was her personal friend, and painted that striking portrait of her which we see preserved to this hour in the Cappella delle Volte in the great Church of San Domenico. He has given her the “stigmata.” How one hopes that they may not have been the additions of some subsequent period! One is tempted to believe in them if Vanni believed in them and saw them. They were allowed to her by one Pope, and cancelled by a later Holy

Father under Franciscan pressure. It is a remarkable portrait of a remarkable woman, anyhow, and has something of Lorenzetti influence upon it. The picture has done much to keep alive in Siena the veneration for St Catherine's extraordinary virtues and abilities.

Vanni was an active politician and held office in the State, and took his share in one, at least, of those numerous revolutions that were ever convulsing his turbulent city. That was the cause of his not having painted much, it must be supposed. He was an artist of great abilities, of admirable grace and sweetness, so that it is to be regretted that he "gave up to party what was meant for mankind." His beautiful works besides the "St Catherine," are an "Annunciation" in the Saracini Palace; an exquisite polyptych in the little Church of Santo Stefano that abuts on the Lizza, and a fine "Madonna and Infant" in the Church of San Donato.¹ I could find but one work of his in the "Belle Arti"; not a good instance of his powers, I

¹ Some give this picture to Barna.

think. There were two later artists of the same name, who must not be confounded with Andrea.

Bartolo di Fredi (1330-1410).—I think that this master has acquired fame rather as the master of great artists than from surpassing merits of his own. (Amongst those was one of the greatest of the late Trecento, namely, Taddeo di Bartolo.) Yet there are some interesting works of his in the "Belle Arti": e.g., portions of a large polyptych which came from San Francesco at Montalcino, where he seems to have chiefly painted, and some Predelle.

Two pictures of his, also coming from Montalcino, a "Deposition" and a "Coronation of the Virgin," were to be seen in the Mostra at Siena in 1904, neither of them very great works. Indeed, in several pictures of his I have found Bartolo di Fredi inclined to be far-fetched, and upon the verge of extravagance. Nevertheless there is much to admire in his frescoes of "Our Saviour and the Evangelists," upon the vaults and walls of the left-hand side entrance of the Palazzo

Pubblico. Although ill-cared for, they are still very decorative.

Nor should a triptych of his in the interesting and venerable little Church of San Bartolommeo—now assigned to the Contrada dell' Istrice as their chapel—be overlooked. His best works in the "Belle Arti" are: No. 101, an "Assumption" with a Predella of "Saints"; Nos. 98 and 103, Predelle; and No. 106, "Santi Antonio e Onofrio."

With Bartolo di Fredi commences a long list of Sienese artists who have neither surnames nor nicknames. It is, consequently, confusing for any one new to Sienese art, to impress upon his memory the names of artists whom he has begun to admire. Giovannis, and Giorgios, and Stefanos, all coupled with the Christian names of their fathers or masters, convey, at first, nothing to him. Which is Stefano di Giovanni, and which Giovanni di Stefano; and is Matteo di Giovanni later or earlier than either? Thus it is not all smooth sailing at first to master your masters. And it is almost a

relief to get to "Sano," a little later on, and to be borne out by others in dropping his "Pietro."

Taddeo di Bartolo (1362-1422). — And now we meet once more one of the great names of Sienese art, although he, too, comes down to us labelled with his master's name. There had been somewhat of a lull in the Sienese art-world since the Lorenzetti's day, and Taddeo di Bartolo appears in time to carry on the great traditions. Taddeo di Bartolo was in great demand in many Italian cities, but his greatest efforts, we are glad to know, were reserved for his native place. The greatness and completeness of his work in the Chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico can scarcely be overestimated. Siena had not seen such noble painting since Ambrogio had adorned the Sala dei Nove. Nor would it be an exaggeration to say, that not since Giotto's epoch-marking frescoes at Assisi and Padua, had any series of religious paintings been so ably, largely, and reverentially carried out as these by the brush of Taddeo di Bartolo. Nor were works of equal merit

and upon a similar scale to be seen again in Siena, until Vecchietta, some forty years later, undertook the fresco adornment of the Baptistery of San Giovanni. The walls of this dark chapel, and those of the adjacent lobby, glow with Taddeo's beautiful frescoes, which are chiefly representations of the later scenes of the Virgin's life. In variety, grouping, movement, and colouring even, we see how greatly Sienese art has continued to progress. If one particular scene in these fine designs may be singled out as an instance of the artist's ability, it is that of our Saviour descending with His angels to welcome the "Arisen Virgin." The beautiful smile of recognition on her countenance seemed to me an exquisite detail. It cannot be affirmed, I fear, that these fine paintings remain as the artist left them, touched only by the hand of time; for they have been more than "toccato" (as the Italians express it) by the hand of man—outlined and accentuated with the coarsest and stiffest of brushes. Some attribute to Taddeo the Map of Rome in the Sala del Mappamondo, and also the figures of gods, close by.

In the "Belle Arti" there are many pictures by Taddeo. Between the Nos. 127 and 143, are to be found several of his most interesting works. The large Crucifix there, No. 56, is also attributed to him. I thought it the finest specimen of that branch of work which I had yet seen. The type was originated probably by Margaritone, a much earlier artist,¹ and we know of one or two executed by Giotto. In the church of the Servi (where there are many noteworthy works of Sienese masters) there is a beautiful "Nativity" of Taddeo's. It is not easily seen, for it is placed too high over a "Madonna" by Matteo di Giovanni. To Taddeo, also, are attributed three fine and well-preserved panels from Santa Agata in the neighbourhood: "St Peter and a French Saint"; "Four Saints"; "Saints Paul and John the Baptist"—dignified and very fine in colour each of them. And also a "St John the Baptist" from the Church of San Donato in Ginestreto (in the neighbourhood),

¹ Margaritone must be classed amongst the Byzantines, although an "advanced" one.

a singularly grand and devotional representation.

In the Opera del Duomo, nine panels, by Taddeo, highly characteristic examples of his dignified style, representing the "Creed," should not be overlooked. And below them a "Crucifixion" should be noticed.

But to find (it almost demands a voyage of discovery) what I believe to be quite the finest panel-picture ever produced by this artist, the visitor to Siena must perform a small pilgrimage to that very ancient and remarkable, and somewhat cavernous institution, known as the "Ospedale della Scala," in the Piazza del Duomo.

He will have to descend flights of steps, and to plunge into what is prosaically termed the "bowels of the earth." He will have to grope his way through darksome corridors, through gloomy apartments and chapels rarely visited by gleams of daylight, and but fitfully illuminated by gleams of artificial light (when he can get it) before he can come upon the room (upon a higher level, fortunately) where this priceless treasure can be seen.

And he cannot undertake this alone by any means, not indeed before he has tracked to one of his hiding-places, a most illusive "Will-o'-the-Wisp"—Custode, somewhere upon the other side of the Piazza. It will be long before you can light upon him, for he is a man of many previous engagements, and to him, apparently, have been entrusted many multifarious tasks, so that he seems to be always employed in some other fastness of these ramifying buildings, than where you hoped to have run him down. Baal's priests had quite as much difficulty in ascertaining the whereabouts of their god. But finally you do come upon your quarry, perhaps lapped in slumber (which, I think, was the final solution of the possibilities as to Baal).

But, once captured and laid hold of, and forced, or induced, to do your bidding in the way of producing keys and unlocking gates and doors, and shedding gleams of sorely-needed torch-light to the right and left of you during your subterranean progress, you do feel,—all past impediments, hindrances and procrastinations forgotten and forgiven

—not only his debtor, but his grateful and obliged servant for life, when he has at last led you into the Annesso della Sacristia, where Taddeo's great work is hung.

This room has been well and appropriately termed the "Stanza del Buon Quadro," "*the Beautiful Picture*" — *par excellence*. For there is none finer by Taddeo in all Siena, and very few finer by any other artist. The subject is the Madonna and Infant, attended by two orchestral angels, and flanked by Saints Andrew and John the Baptist.

You may well sit down for half an hour, and give up your soul to this beautiful triptych; for it is itself the soul of Sienese Quattrocento work, and now, if not before, you realise what *that* means at its highest and its best.

There are two artists, partly contemporary with Taddeo,¹ and, perhaps, influenced by him, who may be mentioned in this brief notice of him.

¹ A third, possibly, is Mino del Pellicciaio, and he is to be remarked as the painter of the beautiful "*Madonna del Belvedere*," in the Church of the Servi.

Luca di Tommè (died 1381) is to be identified by two fine works in Siena—a beautiful fresco of Saints in the Seminario di San Francesco, and a polyptych in the “Belle Arti”—No. 109, “St Anna, the Madonna and Infant, with Saints John the Baptist, Anthony, and Catherine.”

Luca di Tommè was painting in St Catherine’s lifetime, and must often have seen her, as did A. Vanni. This presentment of her is therefore extremely valuable.

To Barna,¹ the other artist mentioned, no authentic work in Siena can be assigned, but at San Gimignano (a kind of art-annexe of Siena) his frescoes of the “Life and Death of our Saviour” in the Collegiata are among the most valuable productions of the epoch. Whilst engaged in that work he was killed by a fall from his platform. One is reminded of the similar fate of the great Murillo at Cadiz, and of Belisario Corenzio at Naples, in more recent years.

¹ To Barna, however, a later authority attributes a Madonna in the Church of St Donato, which has also been assigned to A. Vanni.

Mr. U



Photo]

[Brogi

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI.
By Stefano di Giovanni (Sassetta).

Stefano di Giovanni (1392-1450).—You will soon master this Stefano, for you may call him “Sassetta,” and may regard him as one of the most attractive artists of the Quattrocento; and armed with such warranty of his merits, you should, upon the earliest occasion, go and see his greatest work, that in the Church of the Osservanza, just a mile out of the city. You would go there for other reasons also, for the church owes its being to the great Sienese Saint, Bernardino. The picture referred to is a triptych of the Madonna with Saints Ambrose and Jerome. There are other Saints above.

In the celebrated Saracini Palace there is a much admired small “Adoration of the Magi.” It has somewhat of a Florentine character, and reminds you of Gentile da Fabriano. It has, indeed, been attributed to Fra Angelico. The picture is very gay in colour and gilding, and of very graceful and refined execution. In the “Belle Arti” there are many of Sassetta’s works. Some of the more distinguished are: No. 200, a

“Crucifixion”; No. 168, “The Four Protector Saints of Siena—Savinus, Victor, Crescentius and Ansanus”; and No. 67, “A Last Supper.” There are other works of inferior merit, in the vicinity of those named above. For though Sassetta was a man of genius he was not always at his best, and could even be very bad when he was in the vein. Some of his contemporaries had a very high opinion of him, it seems, for imitation is, we know, the sincerest form of flattery.

There are one or two of the famous Tavolette della Biccherna e Gabella in the Piccolomini Palace (of which more anon), which were painted by him, or by some very close students of his style, such as Giovanni di Paolo, *e.g.*

Sano di Pietro (1406-1481) was a most prolific artist, but as able as fertile, and unfailingly charming. None of the great Taddeo's numerous pupils have done him more credit. No one of the Sienese masters maintained a higher level of work, or had a loftier sense of beauty. You come to feel sure of Sano always. That upon whatsoever

he places his conscientious hand, he will do his best. That he won't trifle with you, nor make experiments upon the *corpus vile* of your defective experience of art, *in more* (may I say it?) of Giovanni di Paolo perhaps, and of some other painters here and elsewhere. That he, Sano, is ready always to bring out of his stores of art-knowledge his best of thought and skill for your inspection. Thus it is that he remains so dear to the hearts of the Sienese (and to yourself), and that two whole rooms of the "Belle Arti" are consecrated to his productions, or to those avowedly influenced by him, and that there is scarce a church or pictured chamber in Siena where something of his, great, and beautiful, and charming, is lacking. Of all such "choirs and places," it is the Stanza di Biccherna in the Palazzo Pubblico, where Sano's loveliest fresco, the "Coronation of the Virgin," is still to be seen.

I think that the Coronation has been treated by no artist with greater poetic charm than by Sano. The grace and holiness of conception of this one make it equal to

Simone's own "Majestas." It is in fairly good preservation, and has been far less meddled with by restorers, or tampered with by Time, than most of the frescoes of that epoch. You will have one regret—that it should have been requisite to paint it over an older work still, by Lippo di Vanni. (*His* name is still beneath his obliterated fresco). For of that pupil of Simone nothing authentic remains now in Siena, although some would attribute to him a fresco of a battle in the Sala del Mappamondo.

Sano was a contemporary of the great Saint Bernardino, and probably a friend, for he has painted him so often that there is no Sienese whose figure and features are so familiar to us. Two of the best of his portraits of the Saint (upon panel) may be seen in the Chapter House of the Duomo, and there is a third, much larger, in the same place. There are others of him in the Palazzo Pubblico.

Among some of the best of Sano's works may be enumerated: in the Church of Santo Spirito a large crucifix; in the sacristy of

San Pietro alle Scale, a "Santa Lucia," and "Angel of the Annunciation"; in the "Confraternità della Madonna," beneath the Ospedale della Scale, a "Madonna"; in the Ex-Convent Campansi, an "Annunciation," more archaistic than usual, and perhaps inferior for him; at the Church of the Osservanza a "Madonna," and a polyptych of eight Saints, the beautiful Predella of which has been placed beneath another picture. All of these are charming works. But it is in the "Belle Arti" that you will find the best opportunity of studying this most attractive master. The high level of excellence maintained throughout is very remarkable. Those that give the most pleasure are the following:—No. 226, a polyptych of "Saint Benedict and other Saints"; No. 241, "The Virgin appearing to Calixtus III.," and commending Siena to his protection—a delightful work, Siena being individualised by its two loftiest monuments, the Mangia Tower and the Campanile of the Duomo. No. 231 is also pleasing, albeit the Virgin is somewhat marred by a conspicuous

deficiency of chin. Here is another picture suffused with holy charm, of "Three Bishops and other Saints" (the numbering is not clear here). The countenances and pose of the three, and the vivid colouring, render it one of the most beautiful in the Gallery.

Sano's idiosyncrasy is very marked. You rarely mistake him. A mannerism of his is to tilt his round-faced Madonnas' heads much on one side, and often to curtail their chins. He always shows a remarkable fondness for round eyes. I thought at first that he accentuated them unduly; but after passing a month in Siena I learned that a characteristic of Sienese faces *is* round eyes. Sano has an excessive predilection for gold backgrounds. He is very anti-Umbrian in that respect. Perhaps that came to him from having worked much in missals and choir-books, and in the Tavolette della Biccherna e Gabella. But in any case he rarely, or never, gives you a landscape background. Another notable talent of his was his admirable rendering of beautiful stuffs and embroideries. He clothes his

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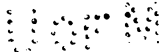


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ST. BERNARDINO PREACHING IN FRONT OF THE PALAZZO PUBBLICO, SIENA.

By Sano di Pietro.



To face p. 157.

subjects most sumptuously. He is quite a Venetian in that respect.

One picture of Sano's, in the Chapter House of the Duomo, demands careful attention, because it is a most interesting historical record, and represents a scene in Siena which Sano beheld with his own eyes. It is the preaching of Sano's own friend, San Bernardino, in front of the Palazzo Pubblico. The Saint is in his pulpit, erected a few feet in front of the main entrance of the building. He is grasping with both hands a square shield emblazoned with the I.H.S. — the device originated by San Bernardino himself. This he exhibits to a kneeling crowd of hooded nuns upon one side, and of *frati* upon the other. Upon a higher level is a kneeling bishop with two attendants, sheltered by a curtain. To the left of the picture appears the small Cappella della Piazza, which had been completed in 1376, some forty-five years before the execution of this picture of Sano's. The Palazzo has been but little altered externally (the Chapel considerably) since Sano painted this striking scene.

Giovanni di Paolo (1403-1482).—Concerning this contemporary of Sano's you will probably, as you pass in review the Sieneſe maſters, make more notes than about any other. Firſtly, becauſe his works are numerous; and ſecondly, becauſe he is a Proteus of art, and turns up in ſo many guiſes. At times he becomes very quaint. He had acquired a reputation for verſatility—a rather dangerous one for a ſerious artiſt—and in order to live up to his character, he ſometimes attempts more than he is able to carry out ſatisfactorily. This may be ſaid of him without appearing to deny him the gift of the uncommon talents which he certainly poſſeſſed. It never could have been ſaid of him, as Johnson ſaid of Goldſmith, "*nihil non tetigit quod non ornavit.*" For Giovanni di Paolo would have done better to have left untouched many of the ſubjects he dealt with. For inſtance, "The Circumciſion," No. 211 in the "Belle Arti," is quaint to the laſt degree, ſo much ſo that it ſeems an intentional burleſque of the ſubject, although Miſs Olcott, in her invaluable Art

Guide, considers it to be a literal copy of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's work at Florence. The scene of the "Circumcision" seems to be intended for the Siena Duomo. No. 191 ("Belle Arti") is a polyptych of the "Virgin and Saints." The Madonna is holding in her arms the most hideous Infant that ever could have been seen in Siena. Apart from this too obvious blemish, the picture is fine. In his Predella of the "Last Judgment," No. 172, he is more than merely quaint, he is terrifying. There is a batch of his works here from Nos. 173 to 201 (omitting No. 200, which is a "Crucifixion" by Sassetta—Giovanni's master, by the way). No. 178, a triptych, is, I think, the best. As Giovanni, like many of the early Siena masters, rarely gives his pictures a background other than gilt, No. 206 should be remarked. It is a "Madonna and Child" in a landscape, and is also one of his prettiest works.

Of this prolific artist there are many noteworthy examples in the Saracini Palace, and in the Opera del Duomo.

In the "Assumption" of the Palazzo

Saracini, Giovanni has touched the highest point attained by him in his sincerest moments. The veneration for the Madonna was so universal in Siena that the subject was sure to evoke the best efforts of the artist. Here the background is a compromise—half landscape and half gilt. The picture is signed and dated 1427, and both signature and date—which in Siena are not always to be relied upon—appear genuine. In this Saracini Gallery are four small pictures—scenes from the Life of Our Saviour—also by Giovanni. In the Opera del Duomo, there is one of Giovanni's best works; a "St Jerome," with all those details and minutiae in the background, with which from time immemorial we are familiar in representations of this Saint. In the same room wherein is placed Duccio's masterpiece, is Giovanni's "San Francesco appearing to Sant' Antonio." Miss Olcott, in her handbook to Sienese Art, considers it to be a "literal copy from Giotto's frescoes at Assisi and Florence." Another work, a masterpiece, which may be said to rival

Giovanni's "Assumption," is in Santa Maria dei Servi. It is known as the "Madonna del Manto." She is represented as arrayed in a chasuble, and taking Siena under her protection; Siena being typified by kneeling nuns and monks. One other work of Giovanni di Paolo should not be overlooked. It is in the Prepositura of Castel Nuovo, "A Madonna and Angels." It appears more ancient than it is in reality, for it is archaistic, in that it is an intentional retrogression to the manner of Duccio. It seems to have been painted in 1426. It is so signed, and bears the inscription "*Opus Johannis Senensis.*" Although the year of Giovanni's birth is not certain, he must have been a very young man at the time he painted it, and so we must believe that it may be a sincere expression of his ideals at the period.

One of the most original works ever painted by Giovanni is the "Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise," in which God the Father is descending—in a cloud of azure cherubim—upon the world, repre-

sented as a huge wheel, whereto our first parents have now to betake themselves. The picture was sent to the Mostra of Siena of 1904 by the owner, Monsieur Chalandon of Paris.

Another picture, also exhibited in that Mostra, is the "Voto in Tempesta a Sant' Antonio." St Anthony is descending (a little late in the day!) to save the survivors in the most comically - conceived wreck imaginable. The masts and sails of the strangest bark that ever was seen are being whisked about in a pitchy sky. Nine or ten of the crew, some kneeling, are beseeching assistance, but otherwise ignoring the hopeless condition of their ship, which is, though shattered, maintaining a perfectly horizontal position upon a sea which is represented by a series of conical bumps. The rudder hangs broken over the stern, and as there are no visible means of moving the boat, it will require all the superhuman efforts at the disposal of Saints ever to extricate the survivors from the wreck. The whole scene is original in the extreme,

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PARADISE.
By Giovanni di Paolo.



To face p. 163.

although it has rather the originality of a clever child.

It is pleasing to turn from this to the delightful, and almost as original, garden-party, which is entitled "Paradise," where some "exquisites," attired in the most fascinating costumes of the Sienese Quattrocento, are disporting themselves in a delicious grove of apples and oranges. This picture is also an importation from without, and belongs to the two brothers, the Signori Palmieri - Nuti.

Enough has been said to suggest that Giovanni di Paolo was a man of moods rather than of sincere convictions. His aims were rather to astonish and to attract, than to figure forth the convictions of his soul. The representation of the personages and things "beyond this starry sphere" was rather beyond his powers. One would have liked Sano, his contemporary, to have written his art-epitaph. Sano, with his lofty aims and ideals, Sano, who seemed at times to have passed into the invisible realms, to have been caught up

like Enoch, and to have beheld "those things which it is not lawful for a man to utter," save through the medium of art!

Domenico di Bartolo (1400-1449) is yet another artist who bears the name of Bartolo (to confuse us a little). A contemporary of Sano and Giovanni di Paolo, he died a younger man, long before those painters. He was certainly more "advanced" than either of them, as we may see in his great fresco decorations of the Great Hall of the Ospedale della Scala, known as the "Pellegrinaggio." These works are conceived in a large artistic spirit, and executed with a skill equal to that of any of his contemporaries, Sienese or Florentine. They are full of action and animation, fine in colour and drawing, and especially harmonious in grouping, and remind you somewhat of Domenico Ghirlandajo. They illustrate the history of the foundation of this venerable semi-religious institution. They are worthy of the Pellegrinaggio, and what a splendid hall it is! Domenico di Bartolo has bequeathed to his fellow-citizens but little else. In the

chamber known as the "Deposito delle Donne," in the Ospedale della Scala, there is a good painting by him called the "Madonna della Misericordia." I could find but one instance of his powers in the "Belle Arti," viz. No. 164, a Madonna surrounded by a choir of angels, a graceful work. Strangely enough, I think there was nothing of his in the Mostra of 1904, which succeeded in bringing together from all parts of Italy so many works of all the Sienese masters. I believe that at Asciano, not far from Siena, there is a noteworthy painting by Domenico, but I cannot speak from experience. I think that I have seen it claimed for Domenico, that he was the master of one of the greatest artists of Siena, namely Matteo di Giovanni. That cannot have been the case, for Matteo was but a boy of fourteen in the year of Domenico's death.

Lorenzo Vecchietta (1412-1480).—Vecchietta's fame as a painter is founded for the most part upon his laborious and elaborate set of frescoes in the Baptistery of San Giovanni. This consecutive series of scenes

from the Life of our Saviour must always be regarded as one of the chief monuments of fifteenth century Sienese art. It is not wholly the work of Vecchietta's brush, although it was executed under his directions, and probably from his designs, by pupils both Sienese and Florentine. The tradition that the Sienese always opposed the introduction of Florentine art into their city is certainly not true in the case of Vecchietta, who was avowedly an admirer and close follower of Donatello as a sculptor. In the "Procession to Calvary" the background is a Florentine landscape in which the Duomo and Campanile are introduced. In old days, when fresh from the brush of Vecchietta and his pupils employed in decorating this beautiful Baptistery, when the designs were still perfect, and the colouring bright and vivid, nothing of the kind in Siena could have surpassed it. This can be said without any disparagement of Taddeo's work in the Chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico, for the Baptistery is far larger, and the whole interior a mass of decoration. Many of these

fine works have been irretrievably damaged by time and over-restoration. The "Flagellation" has suffered most. The two "Miracles of Saint Anthony of Padua," to mention fortunate exceptions, are amongst those frescoes that have survived ill treatment. A very pretty and touching detail (and the chapel is full of such delicate details) in one of the above-mentioned miracles, is the donkey kneeling down to the Saint. Amongst the Cardinal Virtues — and very beautiful they are—I noted a "Perseverance" with a drawn sword. I do not remember ever seeing her amongst them. She is quite entitled to be there, especially when represented, as here, so characteristically and artistically.

These frescoes must have occupied a large portion of Vecchietta's artistic life, and as he also was a very great sculptor it is not surprising that there are but few other pictures that can be assigned to him. There are but two in the "Belle Arti," and both irretrievably damaged. Their numbers are 204, 210. One is a most rude and archaistic

hospital - press, descriptive of our Lord's sufferings, and decorated with figures of Saints. The other picture is a "Madonna and Infant." In a room of the Palazzo Pubblico, known as "Uffizi di Anagrafe," there is a picture, which, when entire, must have been fine indeed. It is of the Virgin Protectress of Siena, with angels and suppliants around her, and St Martin (a favourite saint of Vecchietta). The picture is a wreck, and with so many portions absolutely "gone," it presents but a very confused appearance now.

A propos of St Martin, there is another of the Saint in the Saracini Palace, a very small one, and much obliterated.

One of the frescoes in the Pellegrinaggio (they are by Domenico di Bartolo chiefly) was executed by Vecchietta. It is a fine work, representing children ascending a ladder which reaches to the heavens—a reference to the Foundling Hospital attached to that Institution. It gives its name "Scala" to the Hospital itself. Vecchietta will always be ranked amongst the greatest of the Sienese, both as sculptor and painter.

Francesco di Giorgio (1439-1502).—It seems that this versatile artist was called Martini. I know not if he was of Simone's family. Perhaps the name had been discarded lest confusion should arise between the two painters. Amongst the contemporaries or followers of Vecchietta, who were most influenced by him as painter or sculptor, may be mentioned three in particular—Francesco di Giorgio, Neroccio di Landi, and Benvenuto di Giovanni. Francesco di Giorgio, younger than Vecchietta by twenty-seven years, was, like him, eminent both as painter and sculptor. He was even more versatile, for he acquired celebrity also as architect and engineer. If he had been a goldsmith too, he would have rivalled in versatility some of his Florentine brother-artists. As painter he was not very productive, and this makes one regret that a very beautiful "Madonna" in Santa Trinita (more familiarly known as the "Santissima"), long accepted as his, should finally have been made over to Neroccio di Landi. Personally, I deem it very dissimilar to

Neroccio's style of Madonnas, but as the "experts" have spoken, we must accept their verdict. In it sweetness and gracefulness are combined. It is a Madonna with two Saints, or portions of them, in the background, and with the Child swung round upon her right knee—an unusual position, though not an unprecedented one, as we have seen in the case of Duccio himself, once upon a time in the now distant past. The shrine in which the picture is encased (one cannot call it a frame) is a work of art in itself. "The Nativity" in St Domenico (on the last altar R) gives you a very convincing example of Francesco's talents, and you would gladly see more instances of them. And this you may do in the "Belle Arti," although there are none surpassing the above. Nos. 277, 288, 293—"A Madonna and Infant," an "Annunciation," and a "Madonna with two Saints," are, each of them, noteworthy. Three Predelle near the above—274, 275, 276—are also good examples of the master. Amongst the celebrated Tavollette in the Palazzo Piccolomini, there are two excellent examples by F. di Giorgio.

CHAPTER IV

NEROCCIO DI LANDI—MATTEO DI GIOVANNI—
GUIDOCCIO COZZARELLI—BENVENUTO DI
GIOVANNI—GIROLAMO BENVENUTO

NEROCCIO DI LANDI (1447-1500) was a very slightly younger man than F. di Giorgio. They worked together and influenced each other so much, that their works are considered to be puzzlingly alike. One such instance has been noted above.

They have also this in common, that they were both sculptors. As I have ventured already to suggest, Neroccio seems to me generally far more archaistic than the other artist. He seems almost to stand in fear that he might be suspected of Renaissance heresies. It is a very interesting question, why an artist so unyielding in the archaic views of painting which he held, should

have been so progressive in his treatment of sculpture. Such considerations would demand a chapter or more, so that the present chapter must be limited to Neroccio's career as a painter only. He confined himself, in painting, to panel-works, there being but one known example of his in fresco. It is a "Virgin and Child," in the Palazzo Pubblico. His chief works (other than those in the "Belle Arti") are two in the Palazzo Saracini — both beautiful, a "Madonna and Infant with Saints," and another Madonna, with the Infant standing in front, with Saints Bernardino and Catherine, Neroccio's own fellow-citizens.

The artist is also responsible for that most beautiful and spiritual of all the Tavolette, viz. the Virgin Protectress of Siena interceding with God the Father, and presenting to Him her favourite city. "*Hæc est Civitas mea*" — so runs the inscription. Below, are emblazoned eleven coats-of-arms, among which are seen the crescent moons of the Piccolomini. But it is by his pictures in the "Belle Arti" that Neroccio has chiefly

acquired renown, and has established his right to be reckoned amongst the greatest of the Sienese masters. His seven panel-paintings (other than a "Triumph of David"—a much injured cassone) are certainly to be ranked with the best efforts of the Lorenzetti, Sano di Pietro, and Matteo di Giovanni in the Gallery, and one of them, at least, eclipses any creation of a similar nature in the fifteenth century. It is the one numbered 282. The other panels, all of them "Madonnas with Saints," are numbered 281, 285, 287, 295, 294, 278. The earliest appears to be 281, and the latest to be 278, bearing the date 1492, about eight years before the artist's death.

It is curious to observe in Neroccio's Madonnas, that though the type is one peculiar to himself, and one very far removed from that of the founder of the School of Siena, the hands of all of them continue to have the ill-drawn and attenuated long fingers of Duccio and his immediate followers. It seems, then, for some reason with which we are not acquainted,

to have been *de rigueur* for the later artists thus to preserve one of the Duccio traditions. However this may or may not be, no one who contemplates Neroccio's masterpiece (the one referred to above, No. 282) will fail to pronounce that he is face to face with one of the most strikingly original pictures ever painted. Neroccio painted it in the year 1476. The spirit of the new order of things artistic — of the Renaissance — was then, everywhere in Italy, widely diffused, and this Madonna of Neroccio seems to mark the closing of an epoch. And yet more, this picture seems to be the final answer from the unyielding fortress of Sienese art to the claims of the new humanistic creed, the *non possumus* of an art-hierarchy; the last protest against the revived worship of those ideals which Neroccio deemed to be false gods.

As you stand before this most spiritual conception, your thoughts stray to many of the Madonnas whom you have beheld and bowed down to in due admiration—to those of Fra Angelico, Botticelli, the Lippis, G. Bellini, Titian, Murillo, Raphael, and Holbein. But

here is a type undreamed of before. This Madonna awakens your sympathy as no other has yet done. And yet she possesses none of the mere physical loveliness—the charm of beautiful features—of the masterpieces of Raphael and the others. In the Madonnas of Ambrogio Lorenzetti you seem to see expressed, I think, the fear of the coming years. In this Madonna of Neroccio you read the serene rapture of the present—the sense of the perfect possession of her Infant. Although *she* is all calmness and serenity, the picture “disturbs you with the joy of elevated thoughts.” The Virgin is no beautiful Tuscan lady here; she is no Queen of Heaven; no crowns nor gorgeous raiment are hers. But the Lord “hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maiden.”

That is Neroccio’s conception of her, and from that point of view he has painted her.

And as such, the charm which she possesses for you is, that the artist has put such an infinity of expression into her countenance.

You *know* what thoughts are passing

through her mind ; the artist makes you see what *he* has put there, as though he had told you of them himself. You *see* how her mind is brooding over all the wonderful things that have come about in her brief but miraculous past, yet she presses the Child to her in the joy of the present, and she has even passed His right foot beneath her wrist, to make the sense of possession more certain and vivid. She has but lately returned from Egypt, for her Infant cannot be more than a year old. Sometimes she used to think (but now no longer) that He was a star resting upon her—the “Star of Bethlehem”—and that He might vanish. But that thought all went months ago, and now she watches Him increasing each day, and feels Him growing in her arms. And how He looks at her when she puts Him to bed in the evenings ! And then her thoughts travel back to that wondrous past when all the wonders that have happened to her since, first began — when the Archangel Gabriel alighted at her feet without any warning, nearly two years ago now ! How frightened

she was! Perhaps it was foolish of her; she nearly ran away and tried to call out for Joseph. But something fastened her to the spot, and sealed her lips. And everything has turned out just as the Archangel predicted. And then that strange journey to Egypt; and how good and patient Joseph was, had always been; and how he seemed to understand everything from the first, intuitively! But the Angel had spoken to him also, she thinks. And the Holy Child had always seemed to take to Joseph, and used to clap His hands to him and call out to him when they were encamped beneath the great peepul tree at Om. How good Joseph had been! And he seemed almost to look upon the Child as his own! And now she has returned to find her enemy, the Tyrant Herod, dead; and in all her present happiness there is but one sadness mixed, to find those other poor mothers childless! And now no one can come between her Babe and herself! Truly, in so short a time, what experiences have ever equalled hers! Neroccio, with his marvellous insight into the Madonna's

mind, has made you realise them all, and see them, just as you see pebbles lying on the sand of a pellucid brook. The two Saints who support this lovely picture are Bernardino and Michael. It should have been Gabriel rather, one would have thought. It is curious to note, in a picture wherein human loveliness has not been permitted to enter, the flaxen locks and almost boyish beauty of the St Michael. He has a wreath, too, upon his head.

Matteo di Giovanni (1435-1495). — This great artist was the contemporary of Neroccio. Indeed, he was twelve years senior to him, and died five years before him. He was a far more prolific painter than Neroccio, but resembles him in that he has given to the world at least one memorable masterpiece. Curiously enough, the subject, "The Massacre of the Innocents," possessed a strange attraction for him. Both in the Church of St Agostino and in that of Santa Maria dei Servi, he has represented this painful scene with the masterly power peculiarly his own, and with all the weird

effects of which the subject is suggestive. He repeats the subject, almost *con amore*, in one of the Graffiti of the famous pavement of the Duomo. The painting in the Church of Sant' Agostino is certainly the best in every way; that is, it is more gruesome in its repellent details. The soldiers are more blood-thirsty; the poor mothers are more despairingly struggling; the wretched babes are more ruthlessly butchered. And the Herod, who is presiding over the horrible carnage, is absolutely devilish. And Herod's family, I presume (it is quite an original idea), are "assisting" serenely, and with apparently a quite satisfied consciousness that they are doing the spectacle great honour by being present (as they are) in two arches of a beautiful Renaissance Loggia. The colouring and action, and all the minutiae of the strange scene, are most masterly. But Matteo's power in the representation of such weird scenes did not interfere with the due exercise of his talents in a field more congenial to him.

His real greatness is exemplified in the lovely "Madonna delle Nevi" in the tiny

chapel of that name, and in the exquisite "Saint Barbara" in the Church of San Domenico.

Such pictures as these, and others similar to them, form the real foundations of his great fame. Nor will the beauties of these *chef d'œuvres* come as a surprise to those who may have already seen the splendid "Assumption" of Matteo in the London National Gallery. *Here* the "Madonna delle Nevi" is not only (it seems to me) quite the masterpiece of Matteo, but is remarkable for its extraordinarily fine colour. It seems as fresh as it was four hundred years ago. It is the only picture in the little chapel, and, being kept covered, it has suffered little or nothing from the effects of time. The picture is dated 1477, when, it may be presumed, the artist was at the zenith of his powers. The title refers to the famous legend of the miraculous fall of snow, in the month of August, at Rome, which was commemorated by the erection, by Pope Liberius, of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. The Predella, a very beautiful



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THE MADONNA DELLE NAVI.
By Matteo di Giovanni.

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To face p. 180.

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one, represents scenes in the famous story, which has been so often told in art. (Travellers to Madrid will remember how splendidly Murillo has given his version of the legend.) There is no lovelier picture in Siena, and as a presentment of the Madonna, it may rank, if it please the reader, with the two masterpieces respectively of Ambrogio and Neroccio.

The equally beautiful masterpiece (referred to above) in the Church of San Domenico, represents St Barbara enthroned and being crowned by the Magdalene and St Catherine of Alexandria. This, again, attests the rare gifts of colouring of the master. There is a lunette above, equally good, of the "Adoration of the Magi," also from the hand of Matteo. In the chapel to the left of the one in which these fine paintings are preserved, there is another altar-piece of a "Madonna and Saints," but it has been so neglected and uncared for that it will impress the spectator but little; and, moreover, it has become so sombre that Matteo's powers of colouring are totally obscured. The

"Saint Barbara" is dated 1479, and signed "Matei de Senis" (one would have expected two "ts," and an "o" in the place of "i," did not one know how very variable an art is that of spelling in all countries and epochs).

In the Opera del Duomo, Matteo is again favourably seen.

At the top of the building is a Predella with four or five legends of Saints. This Predella properly belongs to the "Virgin and Child" in the Duccio room. One has a difficulty in understanding the motive of separating the works, nor can there be any explanation but that of crass stupidity. In the Church of S. Pietro Ovile, famous for the fine and very early replica of the "Annunciation" of Simone Martini, there is some reason for believing that the two Saints Bernardino and John the Baptist, now separated from that masterpiece, are Matteo's, and also the pinnacles above the picture. But Signor Corrado Ricci (no mean authority) is inclined to think the former to be in the style of the Lorenzetti, and the latter either of



the same school, or by Vecchietta. A remarkable "St Jerome in his Study," belonging to a gentleman of Florence, Signor Cecconi, was sent by him to the Mostra of 1904, and was well worth noting for the laborious finish of all those details of furniture and surroundings which, in representations of that Saint, have been by all painters deemed indispensable. Another very beautiful picture by Matteo is in the Church of Santa Eugenia. It is a "Madonna and Infant" between two angels and two Saints. Another very similar picture is in the Church of the Contrada della Selva. In the "Belle Arti" (that unique repository of Sienese art) there are several very precious examples of this master. No. 286 is a charming "Madonna and Child," attended by four angels, one of whom bears a huge branch of lilies. It is noteworthy to remark that the Virgin has still the attenuated fingers of the earlier school. Matteo, also, is fond of Sano's round-faced type of Madonna. This picture is dated 1470. Matteo may have been about forty years old at that time. No. 280 again is

a "Madonna," and much of the same type as the former. No. 288 is a "Madonna" in a landscape. Matteo, unlike his predecessors, was partial to landscape backgrounds. He was not born in Siena, although from preference for the city, and from intense admiration for the Siennese masters (for Sano in particular, I should say), he became perfectly imbued with the spirit of Siennese art. He is, indubitably, one of the foremost masters of the period.

Guidoccio Cozzarelli may be mentioned here as Matteo's chief pupil, and as a worthy inheritor of his master's best qualities.

His "Baptism of our Saviour," belonging to the Commune of Sinalunga, a picture of exquisite beauty, is his masterpiece, and is certainly to be ranked amongst the foremost productions of the epoch. He must not be confused with the eminent architect and sculptor of the same name, Giacomo Cozzarelli. 'Guidoccio has several pictures in the "Belle Arti," and elsewhere in Siena. They all deserve attention as works proceeding from the author of the picture referred

to above, but there is nothing of his to be named by the side of that, unless a fine, small "Madonna Enthroned with Thirteen Saints" (belonging to Signori Palmieri Nuti) may be excepted.

Benvenuto di Giovanni (1436 ? - 1518 ?). With this artist, we approach the end of the long and illustrious era of the pure Sienese School. We might almost call him "*ultimus Romanorum*," though it is for his son Girolamo, perhaps, that the dignified but pathetic title is to be reserved. Benvenuto is regarded as influenced by Vecchietta, but certainly his finest work in Siena (that in the "Belle Arti," No. 436) betrays no influence of Vecchietta, or of any other master. It is a polyptych of the Madonna and many Saints, with an exquisite Predella of scenes from the Virgin's Life. Another fine work by the same master is the "Ascension" (No. 434). Another remarkable painting by him is the fresco of the "Resurrection" in the Chapel of the Monistero. In the Church of San Domenico, opposite to the beautiful Matteo di Giovanni, Benvenuto is

seen to great advantage in an enthroned Madonna attended by Saints and angels, with a Pietà in the lunette above. A beautiful and well-preserved "Madonna, with Saints Jerome and Rocco," belonging to the Contrada della Selva, is also among the most prominent works of the artist. But still more striking is the double "Procession of St Catherine with Gregory XI." The procession is leaving Avignon on one side, and on the other entering Rome. This picture, belonging to the Society of the Executors of the "Pie Disposizioni" in Siena, is in every way a masterpiece. The masterly composition, the beautiful grouping, the fine colour, movement, and action, all set in lovely landscapes, recall Botticelli or Mantegna. Benvenuto often styled himself "Benvenuto Johannes Senensis."

Both Benvenuto and Guidoccio Cozzarelli distinguished themselves amongst those who illustrated the Tavolette della Biccherna. They both have two or three paintings in the collection. It should be remembered that these Tavolette have great value, as

examples of portraiture—a branch of art rarely cultivated by the Sienese masters. Both Benvenuto and Cozzarelli exercised their remarkable talents in the beautiful miniatures of the choir books, preserved in the Piccolomini Library.

Girolamo Benvenuto (1470-1524). — Benvenuto's son and pupil is a worthy follower of his father, whom he often rivals. Therefore it may be assumed that he painted in the real Sienese manner, of which, upon the whole, he may be called the last representative.

The best examples of him in the city (or near it) are as follows. In the Ex-Convent Campansi (now a "high-class" workhouse), a "Noli me Tangere"—a fine work, remarkable for its colouring, and also for its rather archaistic tone.

His fresco in the Church of Fontegiusta, of a "Madonna with Angels," is, upon the other hand, somewhat "late" for Girolamo. His No. 414 in the "Belle Arti"—a "Virgin and Infant with Angels carrying snow-balls" is evidently another version of the celebrated

"Madonna delle Nevi." But how inferior to that of Matteo! It is not only awkward in pose and drawing, but ugly. To make amends for this failure (it may be termed so) there is, in the choir of the Osservanza Church, a pretty "St Catherine" with a lady kneeling to her. This, perhaps, was suggested by the Vanni's painting at St Domenico.

For Girolamo it must have been a sad hour in his existence when he found himself the last of his race, the "Abdiel" of Sienese art, "amongst the faithless, faithful only he."

He found himself abandoned and stranded upon his artistic heights, assailed by men who "knew not Joseph," by the new prophets of a new faith, men like Pinturicchio, Pacchiarotto, Beccafumi and Sodoma. If it be a "crown of sorrows" in things artistic too, to be "remembering happier things," then Girolamo must have been wearing one in the later days of his artistic career. It must have gone sharply to his heart to have seen the interloping Pinturicchio adorn-

ing, in his facile flourishing manner, the walls of the Librería. We only wish that he might have been spared the additional pang of seeing all Siena running after the triumphant North-Italian, Gian Antonio Bazzi (Sodoma).

CHAPTER V

THE LATER ART OF SIENA—PINTURICCHIO—
BECCAFUMI — PERUZZI — BALDUCCI —
MANETTI

As has been suggested in the remarks made upon the last of the purely Sienese artists, Girolamo di Benvenuto, although a younger man than Fungai, and nearly of the same age as Girolamo del Pacchia and Giacomo Pacchiarotto, almost found himself the solitary defender of the Sienese art-citadel. For more than a century the Florentines had been battering in vain upon the stout walls, and now the Umbrians, Perugino's pupils and followers, had undermined the foundations. Matteo Balducci and Girolamo del Pacchia, both disciples of Fungai, had already made terms with the assailants, and it was Beccafumi and Pinturicchio, and later on Bazzi

(Sodoma), who were to complete the discomfiture of the worn-out garrison.

It will not be necessary here to trace in detail all the incidents of the transition, nor to attempt to describe at length how it came about that the old Sienese painting was improved out of existence.

A few only of the artists who took the place of the ousted ones will be mentioned, with a reference to the best of their works.

Cardinal Francesco Todeschini, afterwards Pius III., is generally considered to have sounded the knell of the Sienese School, when he summoned Pinturicchio to Siena, to execute the far-famed decorations of the Libreria Piccolomini. It seemed indeed to some, an almost treasonable act upon the part of a citizen of Siena.

But really the Cardinal had not much choice in the matter. All the chief artists of the Sienese School had disappeared in that year 1503, when Pinturicchio commenced his labours. For the style of the work required, great decorative skill being needed, an artist of the Umbrian or Florentine School

seemed indispensable. Great talent in the disposition of groups, broad effects, lavish colouring, a picturesque fancy,—all these qualities were possessed by Pinturicchio in a very high degree, as his famous decoration of the Appartamento Borgia in the Vatican attests. It must be conceded, whatever were the limitations of Pinturicchio's art, that in this Piccolomini Library he has shown himself splendidly capable. Its frescoes are ten in number, and represent the more striking scenes in the life of Pius II. (*Æneas Sylvius*), a Piccolomini, and uncle of the Cardinal, and destined to wear the Papal tiara (for twenty-seven days only).

No other frescoes in Italy recall in such glowing fashion the pomp and sumptuousness of the stately lives of the makers and creators of the Italian Renaissance. Never was there such a travelled Pontiff as Pius II., though his chief journeys were undertaken before he assumed the ecclesiastical habit. There he is on his way to Basle in the suite of Cardinal Capranica; there he is in Scotland as Ambassador to James I.; and here he is

in Siena again. Another fresco shows him at a congress in Mantua, where he desires to start a new Crusade. Then he goes to Ancona (where he died) to meet the Doge of Venice for a similar undertaking. Probably the most interesting (to Siena, at least) of the frescoes is that in which he is represented, as Bishop of Siena, blessing the nuptials of the Emperor Frederick III. with Eleonora of Portugal. The column which was erected on the meeting-place of the engaged couple, still stands in its place outside the Porta Camollia, and bears the inscription recording the event. But the monument is no longer gay with gilding and colour as in Pinturicchio's picture.

The first fresco will, perhaps, be thought the most effective. It shows a fine cavalcade of splendid horsemen and prancing horses, all magnificently caparisoned. Upon one of the "pranciest," a chestnut, is seated, as to the manner born, the prince of painters, the peerless Raphael Sauzio. His handsome and well-known features are as remarkable for the attractive modesty of their expression as for

their beauty. Raphael appears again in others of the series, in company with other celebrated artists and historical characters of his day. Pinturicchio, his fellow - student, availed himself of every opportunity of thus recording his admiration and love for one to whom all hearts went out.

The landscapes, backgrounds, and all details of this unique series of paintings are admirable.

The architecture of this fine library, its mouldings and decorations, and its most ornamental ceiling, are all in perfect harmony with the paintings. The freshness and brilliancy of the colouring of all the frescoes are most remarkable, so much so, that I naturally enquired of the Custode how long it might have been since their restoration. He would not hear of their having ever been renovated, and repelled the suggestion with some animation.

Pinturicchio did not neglect to immortalise the memory of Pope Pius III. as well. He has painted a masterly "Coronation" of his patron and friend above the entrance of the Librería.

There is other work of Pinturicchio, hard by, in the Cathedral, in the Chapel of St John the Baptist. Originally all the frescoes in this chapel were by Pinturicchio and his followers. Some have been much repainted, others have disappeared entirely. The "Birth of John the Baptist" is by him, however, as is also a surpassingly beautiful "Knight," well known from copies and photographs. The latter is Alberto Arringhieri, who gave the commission for these frescoes. Pandolfo Petrucci, the famous "tyrant," also employed Pinturicchio to adorn his palace with frescoes — not at the present day of any great value. There remain in Siena but few other works from this master's hands, and those the visitor to Siena will not go in search of.

It is with the artist, as with the "well-graced actor." The spectator's eyes will be "idly bent" upon inferior productions. But he will perhaps cast a sympathetic glance upon the tablet in the Church of San Bartolommeo, which records the last resting-place of this famous painter. Yet his bones do not rest

beneath the little monument. In subsequent alterations of the church, the bones of all those who were there entombed, became indiscriminately heaped and mingled together.

The fascinations of Pinturicchio's attractive style captivated many Sienese artists, who had commenced, at least, their artistic lives in the true Sienese faith. It was so with Fungai (1460-1516), a pupil of Giovanni di Paolo, and with his own pupils, Matteo Balducci and Del Pacchia. Their later paintings are entirely in the Umbrian style, of which all of them have left very beautiful examples. Nor must the names of that very great artist, Luca Signorelli, and his pupil Genga, be omitted as amongst those painters who helped to introduce into Siena the new ways of regarding art. Signorelli and Genga assisted in the decoration of the afore-mentioned Petrucci Palace, but have left little of their work in Siena, although two remarkable pictures by the latter artist should not pass unobserved. These are two of the frescoes painted for the Petrucci Palace, and now placed in the "Belle Arti." No. 838

is a "Ransom of Prisoners," No. 334, "The Escape of Æneas from Troy." In the latter Æneas bears off his father in his arms with a vigorous "go" that is irresistible, while a lady in blue draperies is fleeing in his company—almost flying as she flees. The headlong action in both is masterly in the extreme.

As regards Bernardino Fungai, whose pictures should not be disregarded although he became "Umbrian," many will think the "Coronation of the Madonna" in the Church of the Servi his masterpiece. It is astonishingly blue, but nevertheless possesses great charm, and is a very effective picture. Of the same subject there is another most pleasing picture in the Church of Fontegiusta: the earthly portion of the picture being more heavenly than the heavenly scene above. Fungai is represented in the "Belle Arti" by four or five paintings, none of which are very great. But he maintains a high level, and has the indefinable gift of "charm" whenever you come across him. I do not think that he has painted any-

thing finer than the singularly beautiful "Madonna" (in a delightful landscape), to be seen in the London National Gallery.

To Del Pacchia he has imparted somewhat of his own attractive style. That artist's masterpiece in Siena is the "Madonna and Infant with Saints," in the Church of San Cristoforo. His other pictures in Siena, "The Ascension," in the Church of the Carmine, and a "Coronation of the Virgin," in the Church of Santo Spirito, seem merely rather pale reflections of Perugino. Del Pacchia, as time went on, more than showed signs of Eclecticism: *e.g.*, a "Madonna and Infant" in the London National Gallery is strongly influenced by Leonardo and his school. Of Pacchiarotto, the other chief pupil of Fungai, many will hold a higher opinion, as being a more consistent and sincere exponent of his art than Del Pacchia. In his numerous works in Siena, although there is no masterpiece, he never fails to please. Indeed he has only just failed to attain greatness in a picture of much sweetness, a "Holy Family with Angels." It belongs

to the Signori Palmieri Nuti in the vicinity of Siena.

From the remarks above made it will be obvious to the reader that the individuality of the old Sienese School had become absorbed into the sweetness and grace of the Umbrians.

With the appearance of Bazzi (Sodoma) upon the scene, the position in Siena of the Umbrians or Semi-Umbrians themselves became modified. A prominent Sienese family, that of the Spannochi, was responsible for the naturalisation of that distinguished Lombard artist in Siena. Sodoma, although he cannot be ranked in the first rank of painters, possessed an unmistakable individuality of style. He had a great sense of beauty, considerable powers in the delineation of the human form, attractive colouring, and unfailing grace and charm. Unequal he certainly was. No painter who threw off such numbers of pictures with such rapidity as he did, could always manifest and maintain the excellence of style which in many of his pictures is undeniable. The defects of his attractive qualities are only too

apparent. Often his grace becomes affectation, and his sweetness mawkish; his colouring exaggerated, his drawing awkward and constrained, his flesh-tones "blotty," and his canvasses and frescoes unsymmetrically crowded. If he had lived in our times, I think we should have called him "sensational." And certainly the famous "Swooning of St Catherine," in the Church of San Domenico, may be claimed as a sensational picture, although the lapse of time has transformed the "sensational" into the classical.

Although we cannot call him original in the full meaning of the term, there was a certain originality in his methods. To the Sienese who were not acquainted with the pictures of Leonardo, Luini, and others of the school who had so powerful an influence upon him, Sodoma certainly came as an original "force." The two frescoes of St Catherine in her Chapel in the Church of San Domenico, are the pictures that raised Sodoma to the height of his fame. Whatever defects in certain details these pictures may possess, both in conception and execu-

tion they must be rated very highly indeed. Probably in *immediate effect* upon the feelings of the spectator there are no pictures in the world to surpass them. The heart is touched, because the artist has put his heart there too. To make others feel you must feel also. Sodoma in these pictures has done that, and this is the reason why the verdict of the world has gone forth and declared them masterpieces.

The "Holy Family" in the Chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico is Sodoma's best picture of the subject in Siena. It has all the great qualities of the artist at his best. It is a little darker in colour than most of Sodoma's pictures, shows no traces of Leonardesque influence, and is soft and reposeful throughout. The landscape in the background is charming. The Oratorio di S. Bernardino (close to the Church of S. Francesco) contains several of Sodoma's best productions. Of these the two finest are the "Coronation of the Virgin," and the "Assumption," which deserve more than one visit. The others are the "Presentation in the Temple," and the

"Visitation." The "Saints Francis and Louis" should be observed as good instances of Sodoma's beautiful drawing and graceful treatment of such subjects: *cf.*, the fine "Saints Ansanus and Victor" in the Sala del Mappamondo, in the Palazzo Pubblico. Another excellent picture is the "Adoration of the Magi" in the Church of Sant' Agostino, showing all the most distinctive excellences of the artist. The landscape is delightful, and quaint, too, in some of the details, *e.g.*, where a camel is on the verge of becoming an ostrich! A "Pietà" upon the outer wall of a house in the Via del Castelveccchio, is also very much to be admired. In the "Confraternità della Madonna" (already referred to as containing Benvenuto's charming lunette-picture of "St Catherine and Pope Gregory"), there is a beautiful "Holy Family" by Sodoma. I believe the pictures here mentioned to be Sodoma's best works amongst the very many existing in Siena and its environs which the reader will have no difficulty in finding out for himself. For the character-

istics of the painter are so peculiarly *sui generis*, his individuality is so marked, that the tyro in art matters will recognise him at a glance.

Domenico Beccafumi (1485-1551?) must be referred to as the last of the Sienese School who narrowly escaped greatness. In some trifling degree he may have been influenced by Sodoma, as were all the later painters in Siena. But he is in reality far more Florentine than Sienese in his Madonnas. Siena, when he was born, and for some years subsequently, was still under the spell of the great Sienese artists. Neroccio was still active, as were also Benvenuto di Giovanni, and Matteo di Giovanni. Fungai and his pupils were more and more influencing the style of Sienese painting, and yet Beccafumi boldly declared himself upon the side of Florence, and adhered to her. This proved him to be a man of considerable audacity and of individuality. And when we regard what is probably his masterpiece, the "Last Judgment," or "Saint Michael," as it is also styled, in the Church of the

Carmine, we must confess him to be an artist of no inconsiderable power. The picture, with its strong contrasts of gloom and sulphurous light, its lurid atmosphere, the weird effects of the flames and smoke of hell beneath, and the flashes of gentler light which irradiate the cherubim who are gathered round the Judge of the World above, while St Michael stands immediately below Him, with drawn sword and outstretched wings, is most striking, even terrifying. I think the ambitious "Marriage of Saint Catherine" one of the unsuccessful endeavours of the artist to rival the Florentines. It is in the Palazzo Saracini, where there are two other much more acceptable works of this attractive painter. An even better picture is the "Nativity" in the Church of San Martino, a building filled with remarkable works of art. This picture has the additional attraction of a fine frame of marble, worked by the distinguished sculptor, Marrina.

Beccafumi is worthily represented in the "Belle Arti" by several works, the best of which are: No. 405, a most effective "Nativity";

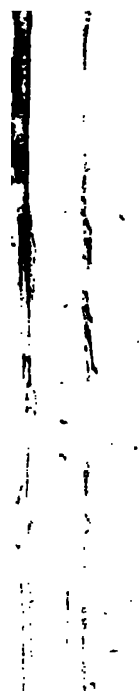
No. 423, a "Fall of Lucifer"; and No. 420 a "St Catherine receiving the Stigmata," not equal, certainly, to Sodoma's masterpiece, but fine and effective. I think that Beccafumi was one of the greatest colourists of the later school, and in two "Holy Families" his powers as such are very striking indeed. These pictures, which from the names of the owners may be termed the "Mignanelli" and the "Tortolini," may in every way be regarded as two of the most beautiful "Holy Families" of sixteenth century art in Siena. They are certainly conceived in the Florentine spirit, but, I think, yield to none of that School in colouring. Beccafumi was also celebrated as a worker in bronze. He exercised his talents as well in the collection of the Tavollette della Biccherna, and also upon the pavement of the Duomo. Beccafumi should assuredly be reckoned amongst the most capable and versatile artists of the period. And it may be affirmed, without making any invidious comparisons, that he was fully equal to most of his contemporaries.

Baldassarre Peruzzi and Matteo Balducci, as of the later School, although neither of them very great painters, deserve brief mention. Baldassarre was much influenced by Pinturicchio and Sodoma, and later on by Raphael's "Academic" manner. It is to be regretted that he should have abandoned his earlier style for that of others; for, in an "Adoration of the Magi" in the London National Gallery, he shows himself possessed of very considerable charm. It is not easy to believe that an artist who could paint so admirable a picture would have descended into such academic depths as the "Augustus and the Sibyl" in the Church of Fontegiusta. Baldassarre's forte was architecture, and many fine instances of his talents in this field may be seen in Siena.

Matteo Balducci was influenced also by Pinturicchio, whom he assisted. Matteo's best picture in Siena—a "Madonna" surrounded by Saints—is in the Santo Spirito Church. He is to be seen also, not unfavourably, in two or three examples in the "Belle Arti."

It is with Rutilio Manetti—a painter of considerable force, a complete “naturalist”—however, that such art as was left to Siena was finally extinguished in the earlier part of the seventeenth century.

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